

Battle for the soul of Labour
Old and new collide in Swindon

Section Two, cover story

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Meet AS Byatt, erotic novelist

A new trend in publishing

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Figures reveal a nation profligate in use of energy and ignoring the warnings on waste Britain is burning up its future

NICHOLAS SCHOON
Environment Correspondent

A worrying picture of Britain as a nation profligate in its use of energy and having ignored the international warnings of the past 25 years is revealed in official figures published today.

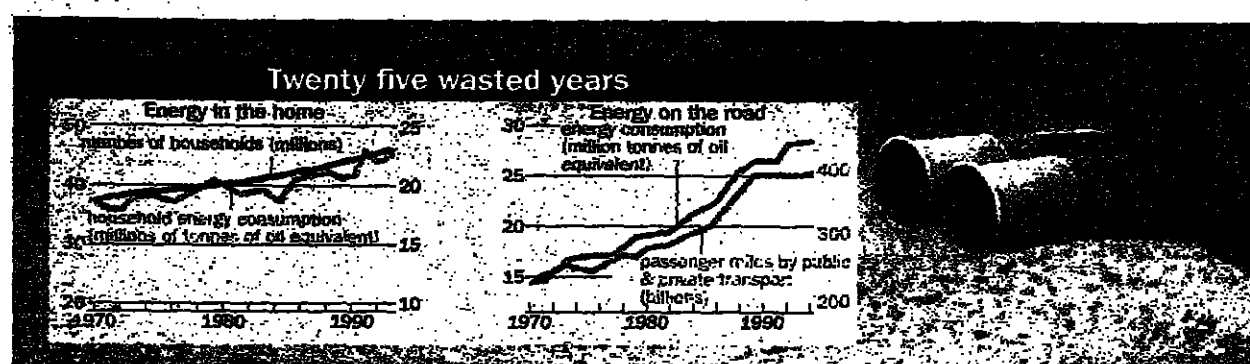
The average British home consumes as much fuel each year as it did in 1970, in spite of two oil-price shocks caused by Middle East wars and a succession of government energy-efficiency campaigns. Transport of both people and freight consumes about twice as much energy as it did 25 years ago, yet there has been no gain at all in energy efficiency.

The figures, which have been compiled after a call for action at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, will alarm environmental groups. They show a dis-

regard for finite natural resources, and make clear that global warming, acid rain and urban smog pollutants are likely to continue as a global hazard well into the next century.

The revelations are made in a long list of "state of the environment" indicators, to be unveiled by John Gummer, Secretary of State for the Environment, today. Statisticians in his department say that publication of the figures make Britain a world leader in terms of openness about its environmental performance.

But at least one-third of the indices reveal that our environmental performance is getting worse. British travel almost twice the distance they did in 1970, but in doing so they consume more than twice as much fuel. This has happened because people walk and cycle less, and



have also switched from more energy-efficient public transport to private cars.

Furthermore, cars have shown no improvement in miles per gallon for nearly a decade, with manufacturers choosing to concentrate on acceleration, high speeds, luxury and safety features instead.

Lorries have become much larger, which should in theory mean freight transport wastes less energy. In fact there has been no improvement; this is thought to reflect the decline in rail freight and changes in retail and factory distribution. "I'm surprised at this finding," a spokesman for the Freight

Transport Association declared. The average home uses as much electricity as it did in 1970, showing that in spite of the growing range of electrical appliances, they have become more efficient. But we also use as much fuel to heat our homes, despite two decades in which governments have promoted

and subsidised draught-proofing and better insulation.

Anna Stanford, energy campaigner with Friends of the Earth, said: "No improvement over 25 years is pretty outrageous. It's extremely disappointing, because saving energy is not just about cutting fuel bills and reducing pollution but

about boosting competitiveness, jobs and the economy."

The Government will point out that today's home heating is mostly done by gas, whereas 25 years ago coal dominated. Gas is a much less polluting than coal - but it will also run out long before coal does. Furthermore, while transport and households have shown no improvement, the new indices show that industry does perform much better.

Mr Gummer will be presenting the charts and graphs to the press today. Yesterday, he missed a chance to minimise his personal impact on the environment - having chosen to travel by Concorde to New York for a day trip and return to London subsonically.

The supersonic aircraft uses far more fuel per passenger mile than any other, while also harm-

ing the ozone layer. Mr Gummer, whose flight was paid for by taxpayers, was attending a meeting of "internationally eminent persons" selected by UN General Secretary Boutros Boutros Ghali. The panel is planning a UN environment conference later this year.

Andrew Warren, director of industry lobby group the Association for the Conservation of Energy, said the Government had failed to regulate the increasingly privatised fuel market in a way which encouraged energy efficiency.

An internal British Gas memo was leaked to him at the weekend. Rob Leonard, director of business development for one of the nation's biggest energy companies, wrote that he did not "want to take a high profile on the issue... there is no bottom-line benefit."

PLO: We're ready to shoot at Israelis

PATRICK COCKBURN
Jerusalem

Palestinian soldiers and police in Gaza and the West Bank have received orders to shoot back if Israel tries to reoccupy the areas from which it has withdrawn under the Oslo peace accords, a senior Palestinian official has said.

"Our forces will fight, of course. They have already received their orders," said Marwan Barghout, the general secretary of Fatah, the main Palestinian political movement, on the West Bank yesterday. It is the first time a senior Palestinian leader has said what will happen if Israel fulfils its threat to re-enter Palestinian towns and cities in response to the suicide bombing campaign.

Mr Barghout, a veteran leader of the Palestinians in the West Bank, said the difference between Gaza when Israeli left it in 1949 and today is that it is now held by 20,000 Israeli police. He claimed that the actual number of Israeli soldiers in the area is much smaller.

The White Paper will restore Britain's strong opposition to any extension of majority voting and will make an unconditional promise to refuse to

EXCLUSIVE
PATRICK COCKBURN

Palestinian leader, has brought in more armed forces than allowed under the Oslo agreement. Officially described as police, they are often experienced combat troops. Israel did not object to their presence because it wanted to strengthen Mr Arafat against Hamas, the Islamic militant movement.

By saying publicly that Palestinian troops have orders to fight an Israeli reoccupation or incursion, the Palestinian leadership is presumably trying to avert any attack.

Shimon Peres, the Israeli Prime Minister, has been trying to prevent any military move into Palestinian-controlled areas because this would end the Oslo agreement. But, if there are more suicide bombs, he may be unable to resist public demands for the Israeli army to return. There is no doubt that the Israeli army could fight its way in, but probably only at the cost of many casualties.

The White Paper will restore Britain's strong opposition to any extension of majority voting and will make an unconditional promise to refuse to

precedent pressure because Israel has stopped all movement into or out of 465 villages and seven towns. The curfew was lifted for 12 hours yesterday for people to buy food or get medical attention.

Gaza is also under tight siege with Israeli naval vessels turning back Palestinian fishermen. In the markets, customers are given a bunch of flowers free with every purchase because growers are prevented from exporting them. Mr Arafat says he will personally bring back flour to Gaza before he goes to the international conference, to be attended by President Bill Clinton, John Major and at least 20 other world leaders, on the threat to the peace process.

It opens tomorrow in the Egyptian resort of Sharm el-Sheikh. Mr Arafat has intensified his drive against the political and military wings of Hamas in the last week. Three leaders of Izzedine al-Qasbi, the military arm of Hamas, regarded by Israel and the US as the men behind the suicide bombs, have been arrested. However, five suicide bombers are reported to have already received explosives and to be awaiting orders to strike. At the weekend a statement said to have come from the bombers said they were calling off a proposed truce.

Anti-terror summit, page 11



A Palestinian and his Israeli guard in the West Bank village of Hussan yesterday after raids on homes of Hamas suspects

Photograph AP

White Paper softens line on EU veto

WILL MACINTYRE
Editor

The long-awaited White Paper on the future of the EU is expected to risk fresh European criticism today by failing to give an absolute promise to respect the British veto in all areas of policy.

The White Paper will restore Britain's strong opposition to any extension of majority voting and will make an unconditional promise to refuse to

surrender the veto in key areas like foreign and tax policy. The White Paper will further make it clear that it does not see the case for any extension of majority voting and will oppose moves to secure it.

But the careful wording of the White Paper - by what it does not say rather than by what it does - will leave the Government slender room for a last-ditch compromise at the Inter-Governmental Conference by agreeing to the extension of ma-

majority voting in peripheral policy areas such as research and development and the environment.

The issue is important to the IGC because Britain's biggest partners, including Germany, will press for more issues to be decided by majority voting which at present require unanimity. Unanimous decisions mean that each country has a veto to block a decision with which it disagrees. Majority voting is known technically

as Qualified Majority Voting because votes are weighted according to the size of country.

The latest potential irritant to Eurosceptics became clear yesterday as Tory concerns over the threat posed by Sir James Goldsmith's Referendum Party were exposed by the leak of a confidential Tory party document estimating that it could deprive the Conservatives of up to 25 seats and "make the difference between the Conservative Party winning or losing the election".

The warning is contained in a Central Office summary of an earlier, also leaked, briefing paper prepared for the Tory MEPs which warns that "the greatest danger to the Conservative Party will be in marginal seats which have been targeted by the RP Pro-European Conservative candidates in marginal constituencies could see their vote erode significantly."

The leak came as it was confirmed that the Staffordshire South East by-election - which

on present poll projections will reduce the government's majority from two to one - will now take place on 11 April. There had been some speculation at Westminster that it might be delayed until 2 May in order to ensure that tax cuts were in pay packets - but that would have broken the convention that a by-election should occur within three months of the death of the sitting MP who in this case was Sir David Lightfoot.

News analysts, page 13

IN BRIEF

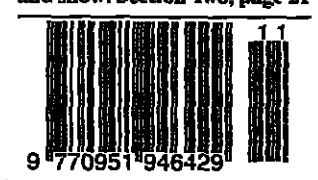
Heseltine humiliation
Michael Heseltine faces a humiliating defeat over his plans for cutting employees' rights in small businesses. Page 2

Bouncing back
London yesterday defied fears of a stock market collapse with the FT-SE100 index closing just 35.3 points down. Page 18

River murder
A woman walking her dogs was drowned by a sex attacker, who tied her hands behind her back and threw her alive into a river. Page 6

Cocker sorts it
Jarvis Cocker, lead singer of Pulp, has been cleared of assaulting three children following his one-man riot against Michael Jackson at the Brit pop awards last month. Page 3

Today's weather
Cold and cloudy with heavy rain and snow. Section Two, page 21



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news

Oiling wheels of debate at the despatch box chalet

Questions in the House, as readers probably know, get answered by whichever one of a team of ministers has the relevant portfolio. So, like those figures on Alpine barometers, a different minister will appear at the despatch box for each query, rotating back on to the bench when finished with a colleague popping up to replace him or her. They give out statistics, get cross with critics and remind everyone of what life was like when the Opposition was in power.

Yesterday there were three of them in the little transport chalet – each one dealing with



DAVID AARONOVITCH

a different disaster area. When the oil off the Welsh coast was raised, out came Sir George Young, the Secretary of State for Transport – a man so hostile to public transport that he cycles in London (where only commuting by hang-glider carries a

greater risk). The portly figure of John Watts squeezed out to deal with the Staffs train crash. And reference to the mess that is London transport (for some reason there doesn't seem to be any transport outside London), would see Steve Norris swing into action.

The first question to Mr Norris was a puzzling one. Did he realise, asked the veteran Tory, Sir Sydney Chapman, that deregulation had "led to buses reaching parts of Chipping Barnet undreamt of 10 years ago?" Which bits of Barnet, I wondered, could he mean? Duck's Island, Underhill, or Monkton

Hadley? No – they were all there in 1986. So were there previously unexplored and semi-barbaric crescents, lined with semi-detached, mock-Tudor houses and harbouring savage stockbrokers lost to civilisation – until courageous Shoppa drivers cut their way through? Presumably there were.

Barnet is also the end of the Northern line. This, of course, is not a line that goes to the North. In fact, all too often, it doesn't go anywhere at all. It is London's most rickety Underground route – the black one on the tube maps. My own local station, Kentish Town, its esca-

lator permanently out of commission, can only be used by those capable of walking down 103 steps.

Conservative John Marshall (Hendon tube station, Edgware branch), had good news for the likes of me. One of Parliament's most assiduous congratulators, he praised the Government's investment in the Northern line, and excitedly predicted a 1997 with hundreds of new trains queuing up to take those happy (if exhausted) passengers who had made it as far as the platform.

Which was all very well, grumped Glenda Jackson, MP

for two stops down, except that sections of the line were being closed for months on end. Hugh Dykes (two stops up) agreed with her.

What ingratitude, snarled Norris. Didn't members realise that the lines were out of commission precisely because of the huge investment going on? Massive delays, he implied, were a natural result of vast sums of money being poured into the system. Which is a relief. Most of us would far rather suffer as a result of lots of money, than from too little.

The barometer swung, and Sir George emerged, his task to

drain all drama out of the Sea Empress, leaving it unable to pollute his party's coastal waters. This he did by listing in a flat monotone the statistics for marine damage caused by the oil. 2,500 birds had died, but (his voice lifted infinitesimally) 3,000 birds had not. As to seals, he intoned, 50 had been heavily oiled, 40 moderately oiled, 30 lightly oiled and incalculable numbers were swimming about completely unoiled. Any second, you thought, he would tell the House that under the last Labour government, only 20 seals got oiled – the rest simply couldn't afford it.

Parallel inquiry into Stafford crash

CHRISTIAN WOLMAR
Transport Correspondent

Transport ministers were yesterday forced to announce an independent inquiry into the Stafford train crash amid from the local Tory MP that an internal inquiry by Railtrack was "wholly inappropriate".

Bill Cash, MP for Stafford, described the accident as "horrendous" and insisted: "It should be a full and complete public inquiry, which deals with all aspects of this matter including Railtrack maintenance."

There was also disquiet in Parliament and in the railway industry that Railtrack had been so fast to discount any cause for the accident which might reflect badly on its own operations. On Saturday, less than 24 hours after the accident, Railtrack said that initial inquiries found no evidence that a track defect or signalling had caused the accident.

Yesterday, Railtrack announced that attention was focussing on whether a broken axle had caused the freight train to derail before the main train hit it. Railtrack said a derailment investigation team, part of British Rail Research, was "specially focusing on the collapse of one of the axles on one of the four-wheel tank wagons".

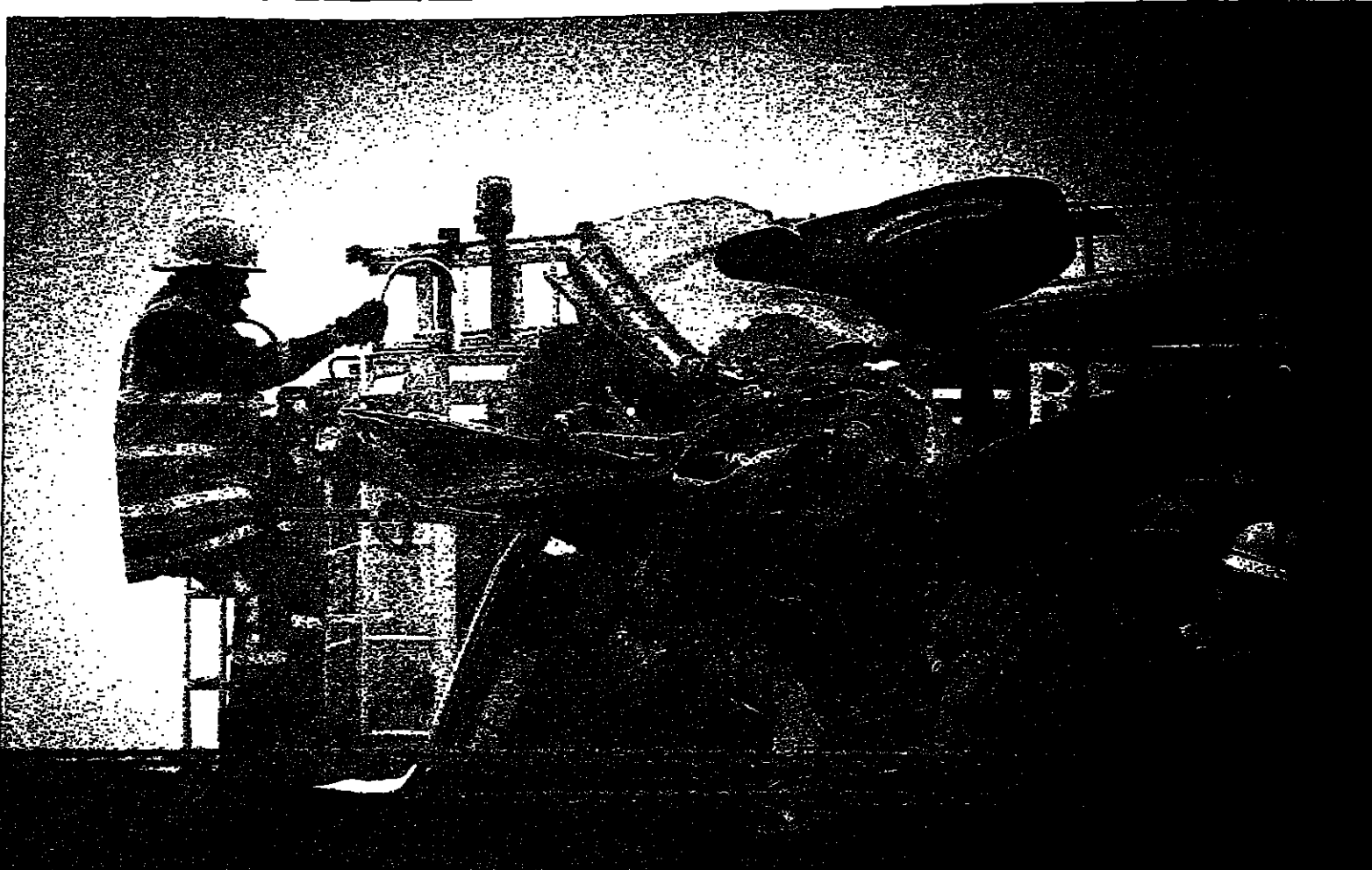
A senior industry source was surprised by Railtrack discounting possible causes, saying: "How could they know there wasn't a broken rail under the wreckage? Even if there is a broken axle, that did not necessarily cause the crash as it could have resulted from the impact."

Railtrack has appointed James Ward, a former director of safety and quality at British Rail, as an independent chairman to lead the internal inquiry.

However, despite Railtrack's appointment of an outsider to head its own inquiry, the Railways Minister John Watts announced that the Health and Safety Executive had been asked to carry out "an independent investigation and prepare a special report" in addition to Railtrack's report.

During transport questions in the Commons, Clare Short, Labour's transport spokeswoman, asked Mr Watts: "Don't you think it's disgraceful that Railtrack should absolve themselves of responsibility for this terrible accident at Stafford before we have had the inquiry? Don't you agree that it would be absolutely wrong to allow Railtrack to be floated before its safety standards have been sorted out?" Railtrack is expected to be floated on the stock exchange in May.

Mr Watts replied that Ms Short had presented a "false picture" and that safety on the railways was at an all time high. Mr Watts said it was "unwise to speculate as to the causes of this accident" when only preliminary information was available.



Wreckage: Rescue workers at the 75-vehicle rush-hour northbound pile up on the M11/A11 in Essex in thick fog yesterday morning. Emergency services blamed 'rubber necking' when 20 southbound vehicles also crashed. One person died and 13 were injured. Photograph: Brian Harris

Mayhew to stay in Irish job

Sir Patrick Mayhew yesterday gave a clear signal to John Major that he does not want to be moved from the Northern Ireland office in a summer reshuffle, writes Colin Brown.

It came as Sir Patrick prepared plans to introduce a Bill to give terrorists an amnesty if they dispose of guns or bomb-making equipment. This is aimed at intensifying the pressure on the IRA to resume its ceasefire.

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland made it clear that he believed it was his duty to remain in office to see the peace process through its most difficult period.

The amnesty Bill will give a statutory guarantee to terrorists that they will not be arrested for carrying lethal weapons or bombs for disposal.

The Irish government will introduce similar legislation to give terrorists equal rights to an amnesty in the Republic.

Ministerial sources said the terrorists were unlikely to give up guns, but have been anxious to surrender home-made bombs, when they become unstable.

IN BRIEF

TV show for bomb victim's father

The father of Warrington bomb victim Tim Parry is to have his own TV show. Colin Parry, 48, will conduct a series of current affairs interviews for Granada. President Bill Clinton is among those who may be approached to take part in the series. *Interview With Parry*.

Mr Parry, 48, impressed station executives with his dignity and composure after the IRA bomb that killed his 12-year-old son three years ago. Yesterday he said: "I'm delighted to be asked but it remains to be seen how I do." The series is scheduled to begin in the "Gran" TV region on July 23.

Racecourse blaze

Three boys have been accused of arson after a fire destroyed the fore building in the centre of Warwick Racecourse, causing £200,000 worth of damage. The boys, two aged 12 and one aged 14, have been bailed to appear before a youth court at Leamington Spa next month.

£950,000 award

A man left crippled for life by an accident on a bouncy castle won £950,000 agreed damages from the Territorial Army and the castle hire firm. Andrew Day, 28, of Weston-super-Mare, Somerset, was left wheelchair bound after injuring his spine during a 2am prank on a TA night out in Bristol in September 1989.

The price of fame

An anonymous collector paid £43,000 at Christie's in London for a tiny and previously unrecorded Sevres porcelain plaque of the Duke of Wellington, commissioned by an unknown admirer in 1815 after Waterloo. The portrait had been valued at £8,000.

The price of flame

A smoker who lit up three times on a flight from New York to Heathrow was fined £400. Joanne Norris, 33, of Safron Walden, Essex, ignored warnings by Virgin Atlantic crew that smoking was banned and twice lit a cigarette in the toilet. Uxbridge magistrates heard.

Passing us by

The rogue Chinese spy satellite is expected to miss Britain when it plunges to Earth at 450mph early today. Radar operators who have been tracking its progress now believe the one-tonne device will drop into the south Atlantic or Indian Ocean some time before 7am.

Starved to death

A woman was found starved to death on Christmas Day in the home she shared with her husband and son. Kathleen Warburton, 54, weighed less than 4st but a chicken was roasting in the oven and her kitchen was stocked with food, an inquest at Bristol was told.

The last laugh

The Cockney comedian Arthur Mullard left £245,000 to charity but only £5,000 each to his son John and daughter Barbara. The bulk of his £255,620 estate goes to the National Children's Home charity, which last December

Heseltine is defeated over bills

COLIN BROWN
and PETER RODGERS

Michael Heseltine was facing a humiliating defeat last night by Ian Lang, the President of the Board of Trade, over the Deputy Prime Minister's plans for cutting employees' rights in small businesses.

Mr Lang is preparing a compromise plan to preserve employees' rights, but to provide arbitration, to cut the number of cases going to industrial tribunals.

Mr Heseltine's defence of

late payments to small businesses was also rejected by Mr Lang with the backing of the Prime Minister, who announced a package of measures to encourage firms to pay their bills on time.

The Government has rejected the idea of legislation to force firms to pay interest on late payments, but John Major announced Government departments will be asked to set an example by paying their bills promptly to small business.

Stephen Byers, the Labour spokesman, said: "It has been

a bad day for Heseltine. He has clearly lost out in the battle over employees' rights, and Major has rejected his approach to late payments."

The use of arbitration was seen at Westminster as a clever move by Mr Lang to tackle the problem caused by too many cases going to expensive industrial tribunals. Another Labour source said: "We have been looking at stepping in before cases go to industrial tribunals. It is a bit like the step before going into divorce, by seeking reconciliation."

Ministers are studying the possibility of using the arbitration service, ACAS, to conciliate before cases go to tribunals.

Mr Heseltine had proposed to deny millions of employees of small firms the legal right to take their bosses to a tribunal for compensation, a move designed to ease the administrative burden on small firms.

Unveiling a package of new measures to help small firms, Mr Lang said there were "no serious differences" between him and any of his colleagues. Mr Lang added: "What we

are seeking to do is to reduce the burden on businesses – and indeed on employees – that industrial tribunals now create."

"I think that we can achieve a conciliation and arbitration service that will help reduce this very considerably – without in any way undermining the interests either of the employer or the employee."

Mr Major said the government would look at whether big companies should be forced to publish data on how late they paid their bills, rather than the present requirement – intro-

duced only in January – to report on their policy for payment.

Ministers are considering publishing "more rigorous" league tables of the payment performance of departments and looking at extending this to local authorities.

The Lord Chancellor is to announce improved ways for small businesses to collect debts after court orders. The Prime Minister also announced a review aimed at streamlining government support for small business.

Leading article, page 14
City comment, page 19

No big idea to help small firms

For half a century, successive Tory and Labour governments have grappled unsuccessfully with the problems of small businesses.

Attempts to find simple, politically appealing answers have failed, because the more closely the problems faced by entrepreneurs are examined the more complex they have proved. Yet the political pressures to deal with the issue are immense because more than half of all employment outside government is in firms with fewer than 100 staff, and as a group they create more new jobs than large firms.

In the early post-war years, the Labour government and the Bank of England set up the Industrial and Commercial Finance Corporation to boost investment in what was regarded as a vital part of the economy. The organisation was

Analysis

successful – it became the 3i venture capital group which was floated recently – but its role was limited.

The 1970s began with the Bolton report on how government could help small firms and ended with the Wilson report on finance and industry, a large part of which was devoted to small businesses. In those days the biggest concern was a shortage of finance and the focus was on how best to give government help and encourage the City to supply more funds.

This led to loan guarantees schemes – which still exist – under which the Government underwrites part of the cost of commercial loans to small firms. The preoccupation with finance resurfaced after the 1990-

91 recession, when thousands of small firms went bust because their banks pulled the plug. This led to a fresh political row over the relations between small firms and their banks.

But once again it proved impossible to find any all-embracing solutions, and the outcome was a series of codes of practice.

However, the row also highlighted a vast array of other problems for small firms. There is a growing view that these together are more important than difficulties over finance. They include a mass of red tape in tax, employment, health and safety and companies legislation and a confusing number of bodies providing advice. Other issues are high business rates and serious deficiencies in education and training.

Investigations also threw up the scandal of late payment, and

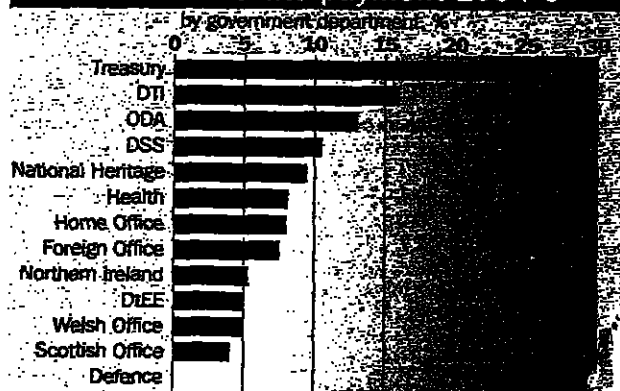
showed government departments as well as large companies were failing to pay bills on time. It was this issue that put small firms back in the limelight.

But it was typical of the debate that the original straightforward solution of a statutory right to interest on late payments proved to have many drawbacks, and the Government and many business lobbies have gone cool on the idea.

Small firms now look likely to be an important part of the election campaign as the main parties line up detailed policies for their manifestoes. Many of their ideas overlap. Indeed, Labour and Tory ministers have each accused the other side of stealing their recipes.

Michael Heseltine, when he was president of the Board of Trade, made small firms a central part of his policy, a theme continued by Ian Lang. Mr

Government late payment 1994-5



Heseltine was responsible at the DTI for setting up Business Links, a nationwide network of small firms advice centres. He also made small firms policy an important part of his two competitiveness White papers.

But Mr Heseltine's gaffe over his late payments as a small businessman undermined his credibility. It was probably no coincidence it was the Prime

Minister, not his deputy, who introduced the small firms conference yesterday.

The Labour Party, for its part, is determined to snatch the initiative. Next week Tony Blair is to introduce an industry forum conference on the subject.

Peter Rodgers, Business Editor



"I'll never forget my mother's face when I told her."

"I was stunned to hear that I had cancer. At my age. I just couldn't accept it. The fear just grew and grew, like the cancer itself. That changed when I began to come to the Marie Curie Hospice Centre."

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مركز الأمل

Commons printer jailed for corruption

CHRIS BLACKHURST
Westminster Correspondent

House of Commons notepaper, embossed with the distinctive portcullis design, is being printed by a company in Wales whose former chairman has just served a prison sentence for bribing a senior government official, it emerged yesterday.

Betty Boothroyd, the Speaker, said she would refer the contract with Cardiff firm, Wilprint, to the Serjeant at Arms, the chief Commons official.

In October last year, Keith Gordon Wilson, then chairman and managing director of Wilprint, his family business which employs 50 people, was sentenced to nine months imprisonment at Cardiff Crown Court for giving two cars to a Welsh Office official in charge of handing out printing contracts.

In January this year, Mr Wilson successfully appealed against sentence, which was brought down to four months. He was released from prison and has since remained unemployed while Wilprint is run by his wife, Hilma.

The court heard that John Bennett at the Welsh Office gave £400,000 in printing contracts - 30 per cent of his £1.3m budget - to Wilprint over two years after being bribed with a Ford Sierra and a Ford Escort.

Mr Bennett was information manager at the Welsh Office in Cardiff and organised the printing work. In a two-year period, Wilprint received two and a half times more than its nearest competitor and, said the prosecution, almost as much as the other contractors put together.

The gift of the cars came to light in 1992 after another print-

er complained of not getting work. Officials ordered an internal inquiry headed by a former senior police officer.

Ownership of the cars was checked and traced to Mr Bennett. Wilprint also paid the tax and insurance. Mr Bennett was convicted alongside Mr Wilson and received the same nine-month sentence, reduced on appeal to four months.

Rhodri Morgan, Labour MP for Cardiff West, raised the question of the Commons stationery in Parliament yesterday. "The proprietor [of Wilprint] was sent down for corruption for four months just before Christmas and came out in January," Mr Morgan said.

The MP asked Ms Boothroyd: "Since the portcullis of this House and all our proceedings have to be seen to be totally above board and free from even the most indirect hint or taint of corruption, could you explain to me how I should draw this to the attention of the proper authorities, so that we can see that the portcullis of this House and the notepaper on which we write shall always be seen to carry the respect which we always thought it had?"

At Wilprint, David Virgin, the sales manager, refused to discuss the Commons order or how long the company had had the business, claiming it was bound by a confidentiality clause with HMSO.

Mr Virgin confirmed that Mr Wilson had relinquished his role in the firm. "After what happened he is not involved in the business," he accused Mr Morgan of "running the risk of damaging the people who work here" by raising the Commons order at Westminster.

Justice for the common people as Cocker is cleared

REBECCA FOWLER

His own fans chanted "Justice for Jarvis" from one side. Michael Jackson's followers hurled abuse from the other. One 16-year-old girl was arrested for threatening behaviour. In the middle, emerging from Kensington police station, west London, in his trademark black-rimmed glasses, the object of their praise and opprobrium, Jarvis Cocker.

The teen idol and lead singer of Pulp, who was answering police bail, was cleared of assaulting three children yesterday following his one-man riot against Michael Jackson's appearance at the Brit awards last month.

He was told by police there would be no charges brought against him following his impulsive entrance on to the stage at Earl's Court Arena.

Jackson was performing the "Earth Song", apparently modelling himself on Christ, surrounded by a chorus of children.

Following his 30-minute interview with the police Cocker, 32, said: "I'm just happy. It's not very nice to have allegations against you that you go and assault children, and punch children."

He added: "I was very upset. I think anyone would be. One of the worst things you can be accused of is not something you'd want on your CV."

The incident has already secured him a place in rock's annals of flamboyant behaviour. Cocker made V-signs at Jackson and allegedly knocked three children over before being removed by guards. Cocker provided the police with video evidence to prove that he had not hurt the youngsters. One young boy claims he cut his ear during the incident, and a number of others said they had been upset and shocked.

Despite the furore Cocker's followers viewed his interruption as heroic. The singer claims he felt "ill" in the face of the self-deification of Jackson, who has had charges of child abuse against him dropped.

Cocker, described as a designer nerd, said: "I thought it was in bad taste given allegations that were brought against him in the past. But the main thing really was this messiah



On the record: Jarvis Cocker with his solicitor, Anthony Burton, after police dropped charges over his Brits 'invasion' Photograph: Philip Meech

thing, and the idea that people touching the hem of his gown would cure them. I'm not particularly religious but I think anyone setting himself up as a messiah figure is a bit dodgy."

However Cocker, who is seen as a champion of the masses for his hit single "Common People" and the album, *Different Class*, was reluctant to be labelled a hero.

"I'm not a hero. It really was something done on the spur of the moment... it's not a particularly great thing to be famous for. I'd rather be known for music."

Jackson, the reclusive singer, was said to have been deeply upset by the incident. His record company allegedly said that he was "sickened, saddened, shocked, upset, cheated, angry

and disgusted", by the affront. Mr Cocker is currently considering whether he will pursue any legal action against Jackson over the allegations that were made against him.

Beatles get back to where they once belonged

Radio 1 is to devote an hour of prime-time listening to The Beatles today - using the band's latest single as the grand finale to the showpiece session.

The move follows the station's decision not to include the group's new song "Real Love" on its playlist. The exclusion order, which upset many fans,

meant the track did not receive massive pre-release play and will not benefit from being regularly heard on daytime shows.

Despite this, however, the song came into the charts at number four this week, and Radio 1 said yesterday that it would set aside DJ Simon Mayo's entire *Golden Hour*,

starting at 9am, to Beatles and Beatles-influenced music.

Radio 1 controller Matthew Bannister, said: "The Beatles are the greatest rock and roll band the world has ever known and have made the world's most influential music. Many current artists have been influenced by The Beatles and the

hour will include work by those artists too."

Since Mr Bannister's arrival, Radio 1 has been redefining itself and cultivating a younger audience. As part of the process, the veteran rockers Status Quo have been excluded and the band intends to sue in an effort to get the policy reversed.

"That's something we're considering, because I was accused of assaulting children. I'm considering whether I should take that any further. I don't like the fact that has been reported," he said.

However, Cocker added that he did not wish Jackson any ill. "I've always said throughout this thing I haven't got a personal vendetta against Michael Jackson. He can dance. Anyone who came up with moon dance is all right by me."

Setback for inventor in Walkman court claim

PAUL FIELD

An attempt by a middle-aged inventor to prove he came up with the idea of the Sony Walkman suffered a setback at the Court of Appeal in London yesterday.

Andreas Pavel, 51, is locked in a legal battle with the Sony Corporation over patent rights for the portable stereo. Launched in 1979, the Walkman has earned the Japanese electronics giant an estimated £3bn in worldwide sales.

Mr Pavel has consistently claimed Sony infringed his patent, filed in 1977, for a "stereophonic reproduction system for personal wear".

His machine comprised a

pair of headphones strapped to a bulky belt, attached to which was a small cassette player, amplifier, batteries and a storage pouch.

However, Sony argued the technology was obvious and not inventive, and in 1990 the Patent County Court ruled his claim was invalid.

Yesterday, Mr Pavel launching his appeal against the judgment and sought to amend his patent with a new definition of his design as being "suitable for attachment to a belt".

However, counsel for Sony and Toshiba, also contesting the application, argued that the amendment to a patent was "an indulgence, not a

right". After 10 minutes of deliberation, Lord Justices Neill, Hobhouse and Aldous rejected the application and instructed Mr Pavel's counsel to proceed with the appeal against the 1990 ruling, which is expected to last eight days.

The cost of the legal action, estimated at more than £1m, is likely to ruin Mr Pavel if he loses on appeal.

If the judgment goes against Sony, Mr Pavel, the youngest son of a wealthy German industrialist, stands to become a very rich man by qualifying for royalties of between 1 per cent and 5 per cent of Sony's Walkman sales in Britain, equivalent to £100m.

£13.5m drugs sting backfires on Irish police

ALAN MURDOCH
Dublin

A multi-million pound drugs sting set up by Irish police to trap some of Europe's biggest drug dealers has backfired, leaving the cream of Ireland's detectives and a justice minister with egg all over their faces.

The plot was simple: to catch the suspects red handed as they imported a £155m (IR £150m) 13.5 tonne shipment of cannabis.

Suspicions were aroused after the drugs were found last November in a parked trailer at Urringford in Kilkenny. But a planned swoop by Garda dog squad officers never took place and no one was ever arrested.

This month, tipped off by her security sources, Liz O'Donnell, opposition Progressive Democrats (PD) justice spokeswoman, enraged the Irish government by claiming the consignment was really a Garda-inspired entrapment that failed. She alleged the Irish police, assisted by a top United States drugs enforcement agent, delivered the consignment to Ireland for collection by drug barons who were led to believe they were buying from the US mafia.

Much to the government's embarrassment there were also claims that even when the drugs arrived there was little or no criminal involvement; Garda ran the whole exercise and

landed the consignment from a trawler reportedly hired by detectives in Co Cork. From there it was taken to Kilkenny by a Garda driver masquerading as a criminal courier.

The Irish government denied there had been any attempt at entrapment. Officials claimed that a confiscated £240,000 "downpayment" confirmed criminals were involved.

But opposition politicians claim their view of events is supported by the justice minister, Nora Owen, who told the Irish parliament: "On the level at which the importation was authorised, it was an operational decision and did not involve any politicians."

M62 and car park ready for Wilson statue

REBECCA FOWLER

A list of proposed sites for a monument to Harold Wilson, the former Labour prime minister who died last year, including the top level of a multi-storey car park and a bridge over the M62 motorway, have been condemned as "barmy" by the citizens of his home town.

The life-size sculpture, which has not been completed, was commissioned to take pride of place in Huddersfield, West

Yorkshire, where Lord Wilson grew up in the 1930s. But there is concern that the suggested locations are an insult to his memory.

Among the other proposals, which will be considered by the police committee at Kirkstall Metropolitan Council tonight, are the middle of a roundabout on the outskirts of Huddersfield, the entrance to a shopping centre leading bay, and outside an electricity shop on the outer ring road.

Critics of the locations include Harold Ainey, 80, a former classmate of Lord Wilson's at New Street council school in Minsbridge. "He would turn in his grave if he knew what was happening," he said. "All these sites, particularly the leading bay, are an insult to an outstanding politician and a great prime minister."

Lord Wilson, who died aged 79, rose from humble roots to become an Oxford don, the youngest cabinet minister this

century, and the most successful Labour prime minister in history. But he never lost his common touch, and revelled in his image as a man of the people who poured HP sauce lavishly over everything he ate.

The preferred site for the memorial is St George's Square, in the heart of the town. Its supporters include Eric Lawson, who sits on the policy committee. "These other bizarre suggestions have exposed the council to ridicule," he said.

But the council has insisted that all the proposed sites will be discussed. "These are only suggestions, but there is a logic behind them, if you want to get the fact over that Harold Wilson was born in Huddersfield," said a spokeswoman for the council.

"A lot of people would see it if it was on a bridge over the motorway, or the leading bay. If the councillors think they are barmy they will say so, and they won't pick them."



Lord Wilson: Statue in his honour may go on bridge

Balliol stands firm in 'Nazi money' row

LOUISE JURY

The Oxford college at the centre of a storm over a professor's post financed with money allegedly connected to Nazi war crimes was understood to have agreed yesterday that it should go ahead.

Dr Gert-Rudolf Flick, whose grandfather Friedrich allegedly made his fortune using slave labourers and was jailed at the Nuremberg war crimes trial, offered last year to fund a new university chair attached to Balliol.

Controversy broke out when details of his family history emerged and some dons expressed concern at Dr Flick's family associations and the "moral taint" of the funding.

But the governing body of Balliol discussed the matter at its end of term meeting yesterday and fellows were understood to have continued to back the plan for a Chair of European Thought in the Flick name.

Lord Weidenfeld, the publisher who came to Britain from Austria as a Jewish refugee, was instrumental in encouraging Dr Flick's bequest in his role as vice-chairman of the Oxford Development Fund.

Neither Balliol nor the university would comment last

night, but Lord Weidenfeld said he had received word from the college that it had agreed to support the new chair and was very pleased.

He said he had been anxious that no one should be incriminated for crimes with which they had no connection. "I feel very strongly that the sins of the father should not be held against the sons. Those who know [Dr Flick] well, as I do, know that he has wholly dissociated himself from those views and is definitely a convinced anti-Nazi."

The row had been a "rather disagreeable experience" for him. Lord Weidenfeld said that he very much hoped the controversy was now at an end and that the chair would prove a positive development benefiting, in particular, east European students who had been victims of communist and racist persecution. He added: "It is not easy to get money [for university chairs] these days."

Professor John W. Burrow, who has been already appointed the first holder of the post, has said he planned a series of lectures on notions of race and nationality in the 19th century to explore the roots of ideas which had dire consequences, such as the Holocaust, in the 20th century.

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news

British beaches wrecked by litter

GLENDIA COOPER

Britain's beaches are being wrecked by litter, with twice as much picked up in 1995 as in 1994.

Last year more than 305,000 items of rubbish were picked up from beaches around the coasts of Britain. This included almost 20,000 crisp packets, 10,500 drink cans and 9,400 cigarette butts, not to mention sanitary towels, plastic, glass and cotton buds.

The Beachwatch '95 survey organised by the Marine Conservation Society and Reader's Digest took place on the 16 and 17 September last year. A total of 202 beaches covering 193km were cleaned by 2,365 volunteers and 196 of the beaches were surveyed in detail. In total the debris weighed an estimated 30,000kg, three times as much as in 1993.

The Beachwatch '95 results found that 1,635 items of rubbish were recorded per km surveyed as compared to 977 items per km in Beachwatch '94 and 572 items per km surveyed in Beachwatch '93. Tourist debris alone was up 60 per cent since Beachwatch '94.

Plastic accounted for more than half the debris recorded, and sewage-related debris was between 11 per cent and 12 per cent of the total. Debris made from metal has decreased while the proportion of paper-based materials has almost doubled. The most common items found included plastic crisp and sweet wrappers, plastic bottles, caps, lids, rope and cord.

Two Guernsey beaches - Le Port aux Malades, Castel, and Fermain, St Peter Port - came out as cleanest in the survey. They had 0.01 and 0.03 items of rubbish respectively for every

metre of beach. In contrast two Lancashire beaches were the dirtiest with 93 bits of rubbish per metre of beach on Western Shore, Sunderland Point, and an unsightly 166 bits of rubbish per metre at Jack Scout Cove, Silverdale.

Last year the dirtiest beaches were Castle Beach, Dyfed, and New Brighton, Merseyside, and the cleanest were Treaddur Bay in Gwynedd, Porthneigwl also in Gwynedd and Thorpe Bay in Essex.

Some improvement has been seen in the standard of bathing water. In 1995 about 413 out of 464 beaches met the EC mandatory standard on bathing water, 37 more than in 1994.

"It is unacceptable that our children are having to build their sandcastles on little more than a rubbish dump," Kim Winter of *Holiday Which?* magazine said. "It is time a concerted effort was made to make our beaches a more safe and pleasant environment."

The Marine Conservation Society added: "We would urge people to take individual responsibility for disposal of their litter whether they are tourists or visitors. We would also urge those in local authorities or industry to take action to reduce the problem at source."

Recommendations made by the society include organising awareness campaigns and education in schools on general waste reduction, disposal and recycling. Incentives should also be increased for manufacturers and retailers to reduce the use of plastics and excessive packaging. The government should also expand the network of plastics recycling schemes and encourage research into degradable alternatives.

Export spur for the shire horse

MICHAEL PRESTAGE

The shire horse can trace its history back to William the Conqueror, but by the 1960s numbers had declined dramatically. Now, however, it is enjoying a revival thanks to a surge of interest on the continent and in the United States.

Dillon, Royal and Princess are stabled at the National Shire Horse Centre, Plymouth, waiting to travel to Germany. They are the latest animals in a growing export market that saw more than 100 shires go abroad in the past year.

Such is the world-wide interest that enthusiasts of the world's largest working horse will gather tomorrow at the first World Shire Horse Congress at the East of England Showground, Peterborough. There are 3,000 members of the society world-wide of whom 1,000 are actually involved in the management, buying, selling and breeding of the horses.

Between 1880 and 1930 there were nearly 200,000 shire horses registered in the stud book kept by the Shire Horse Society. But after the Second World War numbers fell until by the 1960s there were less than 2,000 registered animals nationwide.

The work of several breeders in insuring the breed's survival has now been rewarded. John Ward, field officer for the Shire Horse Society, said, "The latest interest will guarantee the future of the shire horse. It is a wonderful opportunity for the society, with new markets evolving as the quality of the shire horse is recognised throughout the world."

He said horses had travelled to the continent for shows and exhibitions and people had liked what they had seen. Shires have historically been popular with brewers for pulling drays and German breweries were now using them because of their temperament and imposing appearance.

Because there is little demand for shires in Britain, foreign buy-



Comeback: Animals at the National Shire Horse Centre

Photograph: Marc Hill

ers are amazed at how cheap they are, selling for an average of £3,000. But if the interest continues, demand will outstrip supply and prices will rise. The Shire Horse Centre acts

as a clearing house putting potential buyers in touch with breeders with horses to sell. In the last two months the export of 20 horses has been arranged. The centre has 35 shires of its

own, including King, the world's tallest living horse, who is 19.2 hands (6ft 6in) at the shoulder. But despite offers from abroad, King, a big attraction at the centre, is not for sale.

World illiteracy 'could be halved'

ROS WYNN-JONES

World illiteracy could be more than halved by a radical new programme launched yesterday to combat a growing problem faced by 1 billion people, two-thirds of whom are women. Pilot trials have shown the Reflect method to be two to three more times effective than traditional approaches in teaching reading and writing.

Reflect, designed by the charity Action Aid, uses no textbooks. Instead, students make up learning materials relevant to their experience. The teaching aids begin as models - of a map of crop planting, for example - which are built by the class out of branches, beads, beans and other materials. These are then transferred as "graphics" on to card which teachers use to introduce numbers and the written word.

By the end of the Reflect process, students will have built 20 to 30 graphics representing a detailed analysis of their community. The three pilot studies,

in Bangladesh, El Salvador and Uganda, have shown that the process itself is a catalyst for wider change. In Uganda, for example, discussion around the graphics led to agricultural improvements such as terracing and to changes in the community's division of labour, so that men began helping women with fuel and water collection.

Sara Cottingham, co-ordinator of Reflect for Action Aid, said that in Bangladesh trials resulted in 77 per cent of students who completed the course achieving literacy. This compared with 47 per cent literacy in a control group of adult learners using more traditional methods. Reflect's drop-out rates were half those of the control group. In Bangladesh, the year-long programme cost £100 to set up and run. For 30 students this would be £6 per year each. "It is a major breakthrough," she said.

Reflect, which has obtained funding from the World Bank, has now been taken up by more than 20 countries.

Teenagers send out anti-smoking signals

LIZ HUNT
Health Editor

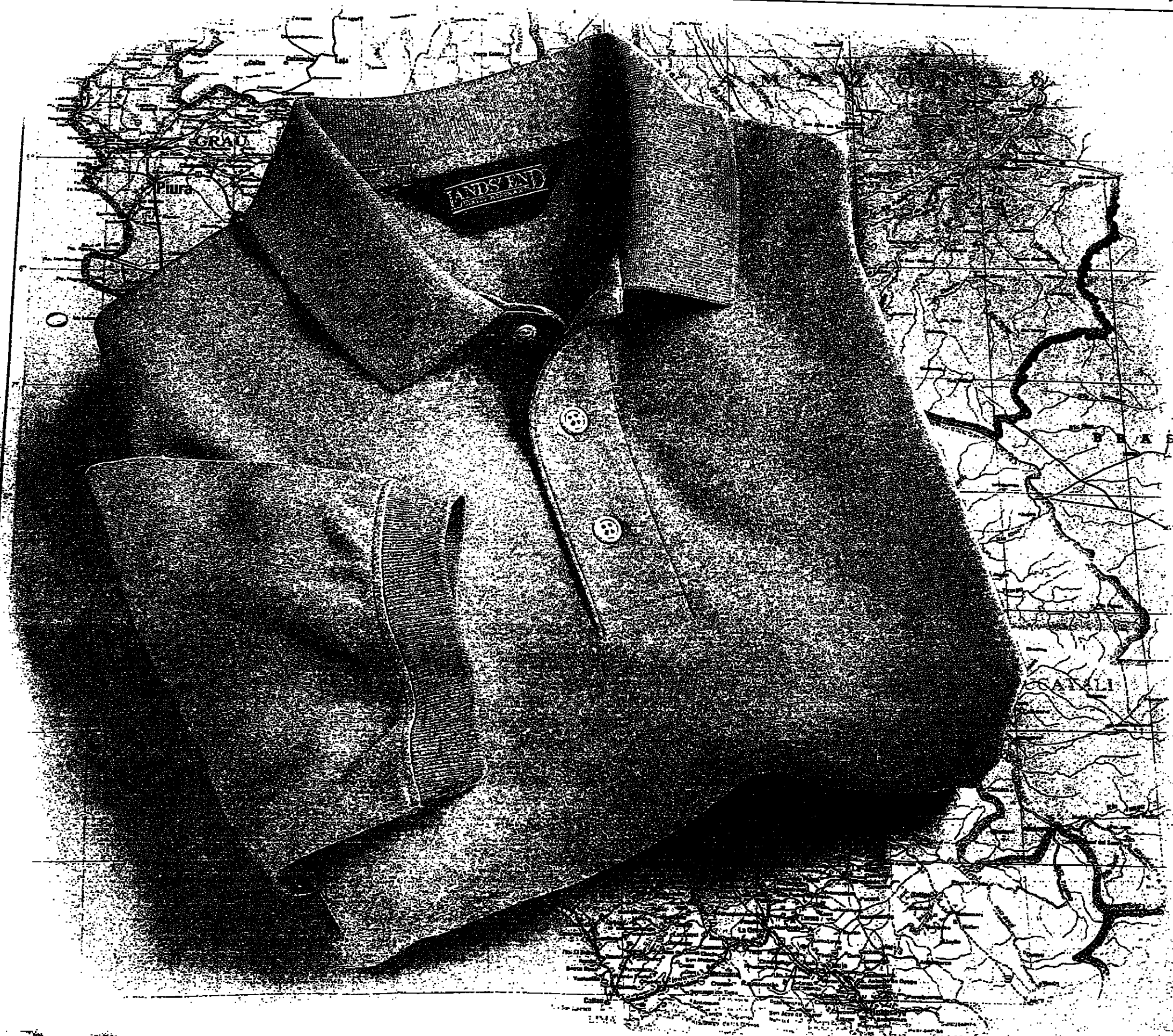
Teenagers are a vital weapon in the battle to stop people smoking, according to research which shows that more than 75 per cent have tried to persuade their parents to quit. Even youngsters who admit to smoking themselves say they have nagged their parents to give up.

The survey of 11 to 15-year-olds suggests children and teenagers no longer see smoking as a rebellious and trendy act. They are more concerned about the effects on their own health of their parents' habit.

Smokers with children are also more likely to want to quit and to have tried to give up, says the survey, published by a coalition of health-promotion groups in the run-up to No Smoking Day tomorrow.

Alison Hillhouse, who chairs the No Smoking Day charity, said: "We were surprised by the strength of the children's feelings. They see smoking as a barrier to a happy family life. Children... are quite clearly worried about the effect smoking will have on their own health... What we can do is help children to help their parents."

In a survey by the National Asthma Campaign and *Blue Peter*, the BBC children's programme, researchers found that almost three-quarters of 10,000 asthmatic youngsters who took part believe other people's cigarette smoke made their condition worse. Of those, 31 per cent were living with someone who smoked. Melinda Latta, chief executive of the NAC, said: "This survey reveals an appalling catalogue of wholly unnecessary suffering."



مكتبة الأمل

Sketchley shed 500 to re-open in Sainsbury

NIGEL COPE

The desertion of the high street in favour of out-of-town superstores accelerated yesterday when Sketchley, the dry cleaning group, said it was closing 160 town centre shops with the loss of 500 jobs.

Instead it has signed a deal with Sainsbury to open dry cleaning concessions within the larger stores. The group also owns the SuperSnap photo-processing chain and it is planning to cement the trend by relocating a number of branches to superstore sites.

With superstores increasingly offering petrol stations, post offices, pharmacies and florists as well as shoe repair and key-cutting facilities, Sketchley's announcement will fuel growing concerns that Britain's superstore plants are snatching sales at the high street's expense.

Mike Dennis, a retail analyst at stockbroker NatWest Securities said the exodus from the high street was likely to continue. "Customers can often get a cheaper, more convenient

service by making more purchases as part of their weekly shop. You've got dry cleaners and pharmacies. Why not have estate agencies and travel agencies, or banks. If this carries on it could squeeze the life out of the high street."

Sketchley said it was taking advantage of consumers' preference for one-stop shopping locations with easier parking and longer opening hours. It said it would also be able to take advantage of established customer flows, Sunday trading and joint advertising with Sainsbury.

Sketchley currently has more than 700 outlets though some high street shops lose money due to high rents and falling customer levels. It will keep 550 of its high street branches while it expands its presence out of town. It already has 29 Sainsbury outlets and now has an exclusive deal to open more in new and existing branches.

Sainsbury defended the deal. "Our research shows that customers will use an out-of-town superstore for many different services. There is room in the

market for large and small retailers. People are still going to go to the high street."

Dry cleaning prices can also often be cheaper due to lower rents out of town. Safeway, which has dry cleaning outlets in 65 of its larger branches, has a deal to clean 5 shirts for £3.49 or two suits for £8.95. Safeway also has 83 pharmacies, 127 petrol stations, 31 post offices and 38 florists.

Some branches of Sainsbury's SavaCentre offer key cutting and shoe repair as well as travel agencies.

It is not clear how much further superstores might go. In the US, shoppers can go to the hypermarket for everything from a car to a speedboat. Some have gone as far as building fake "high streets" around the perimeter of their sites - transplanting Main Street to the freeway.

In Britain, however, the Government has said it intends to limit the exodus by curbing planning permission.

In a separate development yesterday, Tesco increased the

stakes in the petrol price war when it extended its loyalty card to money off petrol in its 254 stations. Asda already runs a similar scheme.

Promising motorists that "they cannot buy a cheaper tankful of petrol", Tesco said it will match the cheapest fuel price at other filling stations within three miles of their own pumps or at any other supermarket within five miles.

The main supermarket groups Sainsbury, Tesco, Safeway and Asda have already grabbed over 20 per cent of the UK petrol market by undercutting prices. However, at the beginning of the year the petrol companies fought back when Esso announced that it was dropping its long-running Tiger Tokens promotion in favour of lower prices.

As part of its campaign Esso pledged to match the lowest prices on offer within a three-mile radius. Shell and BP followed and prices fell to as low as 49.9p per litre with the most severe price cuts in the North-east and Scotland.

The superstores have been making big profits from their petrol retailing operation, and the price war has had a damaging effect on profits. Tesco has been banking about £70m a year, but analysts believe this could be trimmed by up to £12m, with Sainsbury, Asda and Safeway together seeing a cutback of up to £20m.

How supermarkets shape up in battle for one-stop shopping

Sainsbury: 127 petrol stations, 83 dry cleaners, 83 pharmacies, 31 post offices, 38 florists, 118 branches	Safeway: 127 petrol stations, 83 dry cleaners, 83 pharmacies, 31 post offices, 38 florists, 118 branches	Tesco: 254 petrol stations, 20 dry cleaners, 127 pharmacies, 10 post offices, 38 florists, 207 branches	Asda: 118 petrol stations, 32 dry cleaners, 72 pharmacies, 7 post offices, 10 florists, 118 branches
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Wacky race to build family pubs

GLENDA COOPER

The Nag's Head and Rose & Crown are history. The future of English pubs lies in Wacky Warehouses, Jungle Bungalows and even Captain Cocknits as "family friendly" outlets received another boost yesterday.

The leisure group Allied Domecq announced a £150m expansion over the next year, including the creation of more

than 7,000 jobs and the development of 250 sites. The emphasis will be on family appeal through "Wacky Warehouses" - purpose-built play barns attached to the group's chain of Big Steak pubs.

The managing director of Allied Domecq Leisure, Martin Grant, said that they were meeting consumer demand: "Research has shown that more and more people are going out

and eating out as a family. This has been aided by the relaxation of licensing laws which include the introduction of children's certificates for pubs."

The group, which presently runs 30 Wacky Warehouses, is planning another 100 Big Steak pubs, most with the family targeted barns attached. Big Steak pubs tend to take five times as much money as the average managed house.

Allied Domecq are not alone. A spokesman for Greenalls, which run 20 "Jungle Bungle" and "Captain Cocknut" playbarns, said they were planning to act on a customer review.

Whitbread, whose family chain is known as Brewer's Fayre, has 60 "Charlie Chalk's Fun Factories" attached. A spokesman said the 280 Brewer's Fayre will rise to 400 by 1997.



Fruitful endeavour: A worker washes the windows of the Orangery at Kenwood House, north London, as part of a two-week spring clean. Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

Report to blame health bosses

NICHOLAS TIMMINS
Public Policy Editor

A report dealing with "serious allegations against named individuals" in the former Yorkshire region of the NHS is to be published in full this week by the National Audit Office, it emerged yesterday.

The move follows an inquiry ordered by Alan Langlands, the NHS chief executive, after Sir John Bourn, the head of the NAO, qualified the region's accounts last year. He declared that relocation packages totalling £450,000, provided to four senior managers - including the then regional general manager and his assistant - and to 13 consultants were irregular and outside the authority's powers. The deals involved helping buying out the negative equity on individuals' homes after they took jobs with the region.

The inquiry is, however, understood to have raised fresh issues in the region, unconnected to the relocation deals, including doubts about the way a land deal involving a former psychiatric hospital was handled, queries about excessive hospitality, and questions about a severance package for one manager. Inadequate records were available of some decisions.

When Sir John qualified the region's 1992-93 accounts in August last year, Mr Langlands made clear he wanted the issues fully explored, declaring that "health authorities must not exceed their powers" and that the "public rightly expects the highest standards of public accountability and probity in the NHS. Nothing less will do."

He has now passed the report he ordered - which the Department of Health said yesterday contains "serious allegations against named individuals" - to the NAO for publication with its own commentary next week. Mr Langlands is to be quizzed on it by the Commons Public Accounts Committee later this month.

In the world of knit shirts, Peru may be the next Shangri-la.

Introducing the new Lands' End Interlochen.

If you look in an atlas - even a good sized atlas - you may have trouble finding the Piura Valley of Peru.

It's on the left shoulder of South America, 3° below the Equator, and miles from anywhere.

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Some cotton, some pickin'

Cotton has a long history in Peru. In fact, Peruvian farmers were growing it before Peru *had* a history.

But the cotton in this shirt is a pima cotton - a variety that began its career in the southwestern United States. Its long staples, or fibres, produce a finer, silkier yarn.

Now, when Peruvian farmers took home a few seeds and planted them, something miraculous happened.

Maybe it was the hot, dry climate, maybe the rich soil. But *something* in the Piura Valley made the pima staples grow even longer and silkier. (Local farmers said it was "soft as an angel's hair.")

It would be sinful to pick such cotton by machine. A machine can't tell which cotton bolls are ripe; it plucks everything, ready or not.

So, our Peruvian friends still pick their pima by hand.

Then they spin it, and knit it into a 40 singles, 6.1 oz. fabric: almost a full ounce richer than our original Interlochen.

They have no word for "hurry."

Time is plentiful in Peru. And our shirt makers use a lot of it making this shirt.

First, they place the fabric on long tables; and if it's striped, they carefully pin it down before cutting. (Some shirt makers skip this: it shows later in ill-matched goods.)

Then, in workrooms surprisingly modern for this neck of the woods, our Peruvian friends patiently stitch.

They double-needle the seams, to lie flatter and look dressier.

They add a tree-top vent at the bottom, where the sides come together. (Don't know why it's called tree-top; but it looks neater, and won't unravel.)

And the neck tape, made of the same soft fabric as the shirt, feels as comfortable as - well, as everything else about it.

Including the price: from £16. You could pay twice that - or more - for a shirt nowhere near as nice.

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American style clothing, for men and women. It's well worth a little exploration.

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news

Top climbers in Newbury clash

CHARLES ARTHUR

Professional climbers who are helping to erect Newbury bypass protesters from trees are facing a ban from training facilities in Sheffield, their base city.

The move comes as a group of elite climbers joined protesters along the Newbury site to teach them rope techniques to help in their campaign.

The action against the climbers, who have been employed at up to £2,000 a week for "rope access work" to erect people at Newbury, marks another stage in a dispute which is exposing deep rifts within the tight-knit climbing community.

"It's all getting pretty violent and aggressive," said Jerry Moffatt, one of Britain's top climbers, yesterday. "You get routes kicking each other in the head because one has been legally sworn in as a 'policeman' and is trying to handcuff the other while up a tree."

Yesterday the Edge, one of Sheffield's two largest indoor climbing facilities, announced that anybody working for the

rope access company at Newbury was banned from the centre. "Three of the six names I've been given are members," said Phil Robins, the Edge's director. "I've taken this step because there is strong opposition to what they're doing. They shouldn't be using climbing-based skills to erect people acting for the environment."

The South Yorkshire city's other main training facility, the Foundry, is considering a similar ban. "We will speak to them first," said Moffatt, who is a shareholder.

Many climbers feel that evictions would be impossible without the rope access skills that are being used by employees of Richard Turner Ltd (RTL), of Chesterfield, Derbyshire. Mr Turner said: "I have a core of people who are doing very safe work at Newbury, and I regularly get calls from people who want to do the work. In a few months it will all be forgotten."

But Mr Moffatt disagrees. "If RTL didn't have climbers getting people out of the trees, it would be almost impossible."



Watching brief: A bypass protester on the look out in a tree by the Kennet and Avon canal Photograph: Edward Sykes

Murdered woman 'thrown in river alive'

JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

A woman walking her dogs was drowned by someone who tied her hands behind her back and threw her alive into a river, it was disclosed yesterday.

The attack on Karen Skipper, 34, is believed to have been sexually motivated - she had been stripped from the waist down although a post-mortem examination did not reveal any signs of a sexual assault.

Ms Skipper's body was found on Sunday submerged in five feet of water in the river Ely, near Cardiff. Her hands had been bound with a dog leash and she had cuts and bruises.

A man walking his dog alerted the police after he discovered Ms Skipper's distressed pets waiting on the river bank.

It was also revealed that the police are examining the murder files of Geraldine Palk, 27, who was found stabbed to death in December 1990 less than a mile from where Ms Skipper's body was found. However, detectives believe there are unlikely to be any links.

Police believe Ms Skipper was attacked at about midnight on Saturday as she walked her dogs. The area is popular with children, dog walkers and anglers, but is unlit. She was found face down in the river wearing a jacket, sweater and T-shirt. The rest of her clothes were on the bank.

Reg Bean, 63, who found her, said: "When I got to the field I noticed the dogs. When they

came running towards me I could see they had been sitting on a pair of jeans. I began to fear the worst when there was still no sign of the owner and I could see a dark shadow under the surface of the water."

Detective Superintendent Terry Ewington said a post-mortem examination showed that Ms Skipper drowned. He added: "It is a horrifying murder because we know that Karen was alive when she went into the water."

It is not known whether she was conscious when she was pushed into the river. Further forensic tests were being carried out to discover if she was raped.

Det Supt Ewington, who is heading the murder inquiry, said Ms Skipper was last seen alive at about 11.30pm when she left the house she shared with friends nearby. Police confirmed her former husband had been spoken to, but not in relation to the murder.



Karen Skipper. Hands tied

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DAILY POEM

The Knight's Tomb

By Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Where is the grave of Sir Arthur O'Kellyn?
Where may the grave of that good man be?
By the side of a spring, on the breast of Helvellyn,
Under the twigs of a young birch tree!
The oak that in summer was sweet to hear,
And rustled its leaves in the full of the year,
And whistled and roared in the winter alone,
Is gone, - and the birch in its stead is grown.
The Knight's bones are dust,
And his good sword rust:
His soul is with the saints, I trust.

Coleridge was the master of the creative fragment, so to speak, in the artist's sketchbook and this short poem is a typical of what poured out of him. It appears in the section "Visionary Fragments" of Coleridge: *Selected Poems*, edited and annotated by Richard Holmes and published this month by HarperCollins. Next year sees the publication of the second volume of Coleridge's biography, *Coleridge: Further Reflections*.

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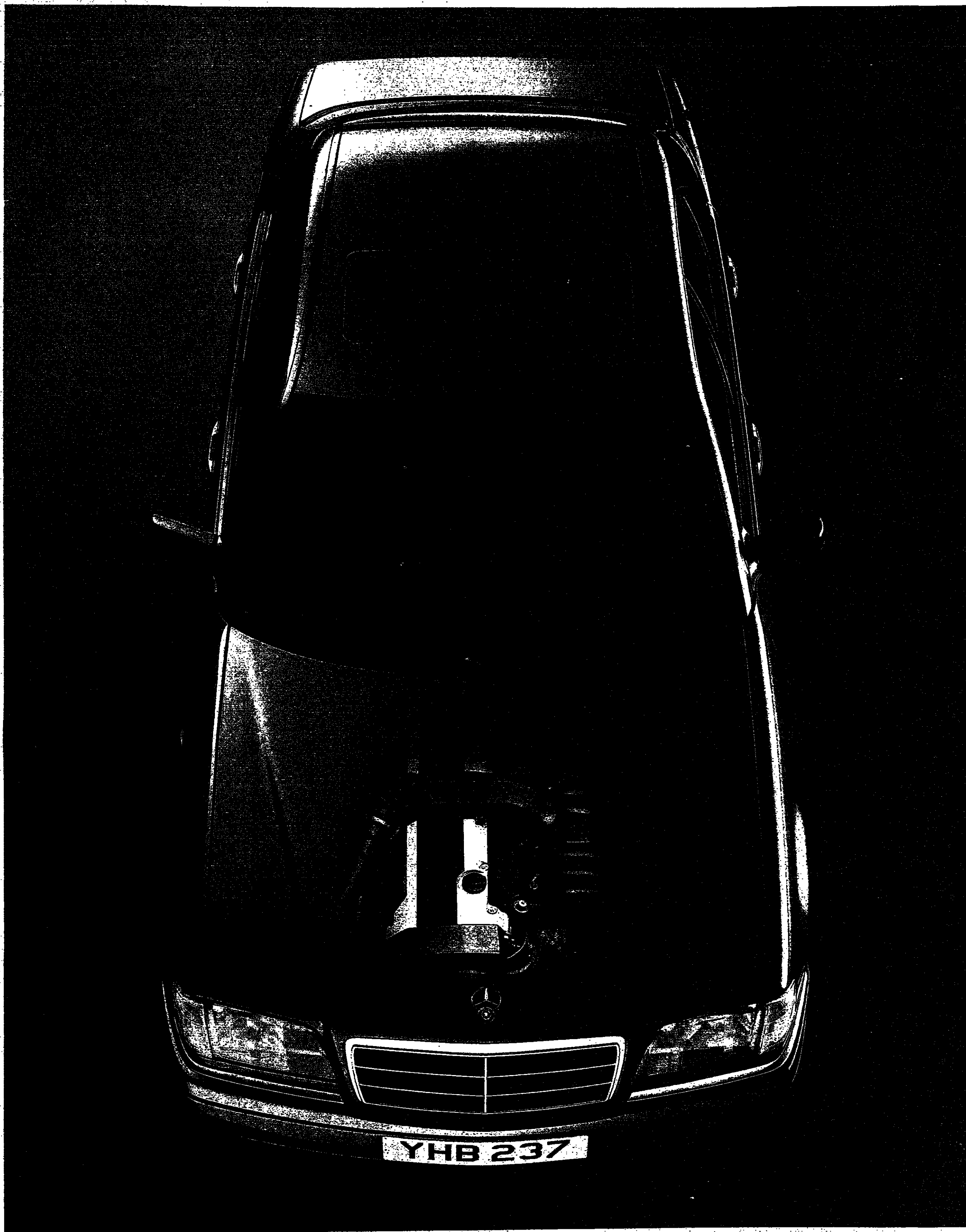
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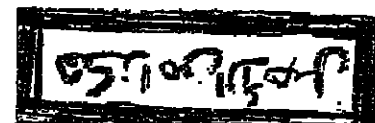
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politics

Young underclass has 'no hope for future'

BARRIE CLEMENT
Labour Editor

An underclass of up to 200,000 unemployed young people aged between 18 and 20 has fallen through the safety net of educational and training opportunities and has little or no hope of obtaining work.

The findings of a study funded by the Department for Education and Employment, reveal a growing army of youngsters – nearly one in eight of their age group – who have left school without qualifications and who lack even the most basic skills to force their way into the labour market.

"With low self-worth, little pride in their community, no hope for the future and feelings of rejection, some young people feel they have no option but to turn to violence, drugs, crime and rioting," says the report. The youngsters are "unable

or unwilling" to take their places in society at a critical stage in their transition into the adult workforce, says the report which was commissioned by the 100-strong network of employer-led Training and Enterprise Councils.

The study says: "We believe that disaffection amongst young people serves to delay their transition to adulthood. It keeps them dependent either on the state, family or social organisations. For some disaffection is due to an absence of a positive work ethic."

While a disclaimer is attached to the report, stating that the findings do not necessarily represent the view of the Department, the conclusions will be given added weight by the fact that the Government funded it on behalf of the TECs. The report gives no credit for government policy on the issue.

Typically the young people have low personal esteem, they are at high risk of homelessness, drug abuse and are prone to commit offences. "Young people feel that adults do not listen to them. They feel ignored and isolated," the report says.

The report, *Disaffection and Non-Participation in Education, Training and Employment by individuals aged 18-20*, warned that a "growing social cost" would have to be paid unless the problem is addressed.

A "high degree of scepticism" was found among young people and their support organisations about the true purpose of government education and training programmes. Most said the programmes lacked long-term opportunities, paid low rewards and provided poor quality.

Out of a population of 1.7 million young people aged 18 to 20, between 100,000 and 200,000 are failing to take ad-

vantage of education, training and employment opportunities.

Young people's problems are complex, but most are "resilient and willing to accept help," the report says.

Strong evidence was found that unemployment among ethnic minorities was "hyper cyclical" so that when the economy is contracting joblessness rose much faster and to a higher peak than among white people.

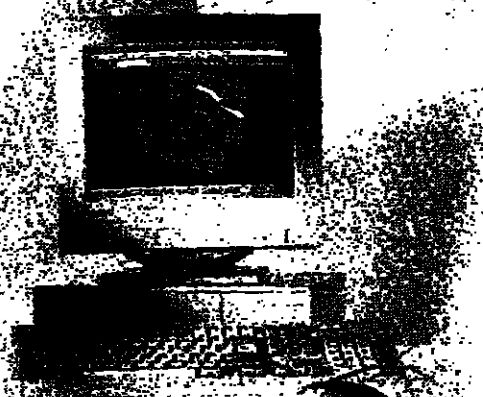
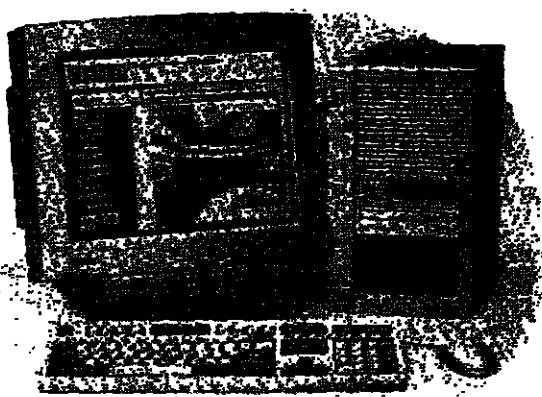
Chris Humphries, director of policy at the TECs' national council, said his organisations had a strategic role to play in addressing the needs of the young people, but warned that they could not tackle the problems alone.

□ *Disaffection and Non-Participation in Education, Training and Employment by individuals aged 18-20*, Aspire Consultants, 299 Ecclestone Road, Sheffield S11 5NX.



Wheels of protest: John Owen outside Labour headquarters in south-east London yesterday where he joined other disabled people to lobby for a greater commitment by the party to disabled rights. Photograph: Jane Baker

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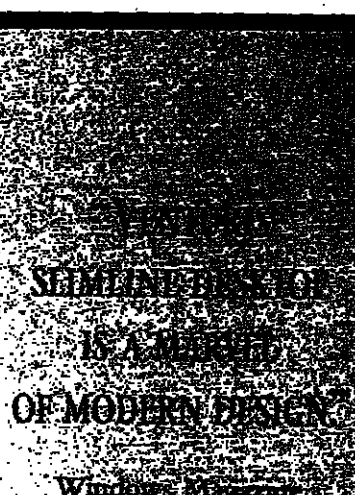
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PC Magazine

Shephard cool on grammar school drive

JUDITH JUDD
Education Editor

Gillian Shephard, the Secretary of State for Education, was cautious yesterday about Downing Street policy unit proposals to allow parents to set up new grammar schools.

She said that the Government was in favour of some schools selecting pupils but refused to be drawn on proposals for parents and businesses to start grammar schools using public or private funds.

David Blunkett, Labour's education spokesman, said: "Mrs Shephard is once again having to put John Major back on the leash and is pouring cold water on his plans."

He pointed out that John Patten, Mrs Shephard's predecessor, had floated similar plans at Mr Major's behest but they had been dropped through lack of interest.

Mrs Shephard, who was attending the Grant Maintained Schools Centre annual conference, said selection gave parents more choice and raised standards. She is examining proposals to extend selection by increasing the percentage of pupils schools can select without her permission from 10 to 15 per cent.

The Department for Education said that Mr Patten's proposals for parents, religious groups and others to set up

schools, including grammar schools, were still in place. So far no new selective schools have been started.

In a speech to grant maintained school heads in Birmingham, Mrs Shephard said Labour would take away opted-out schools' freedom though

Tony Blair and Harriet Harman had chosen opted-out schools for their children. Mr Blair and Ms Harman are both sending sons to the Oratory grant maintained school in west London.

Mrs Shephard warned that Labour would restore the power of local authorities over schools "taking away all the freedoms for which you have fought: these freedoms which are producing such excellent results – the very characteristics of grant-maintained schools apparently so prized by Mr Blair and Ms Harman – but not by Mr Blunkett, Labour's shadow education secretary. Mr Blunkett is even now busy fighting the attempt by a primary school in his constituency to go grant maintained."

She said Labour plans would mean a reduction in freedom for some local authority schools who would find a higher proportion of their budgets kept back by councils. All schools would have to negotiate their admissions policies with local authorities – an unprecedented intrusion into the freedom of church schools.

Education policy rifts revealed

Grammar schools are back on the agenda – at least as far as the Downing Street policy unit is concerned. Gillian Shephard, the Secretary of State for Education, almost certainly takes a different view. She said soon after her appointment that she was more interested in the creation of new specialist schools than in more grammar schools.

The news that Norman Blackwell, head of the policy unit, is considering a proposal to allow parents and businessmen to set up grammar schools using private finance is the latest indication of the divisions between Mrs Shephard and the unit.

Mr Blackwell's proposal is part of his strategy to put clear blue water between the Conservatives and Labour. Labour is adamantly opposed to the creation of more grammar schools.

Mr Blackwell, a former management consultant with the United States company McKinsey, was appointed 15 months ago to restore the Government's fortunes. He has won the approval of Thatcherite right-wingers for his free-market views and his radical stand on education and welfare.

Mrs Shephard, by contrast, is married to a teacher, has a background in local government and believes that building bridges between her party and the teaching professions is an important part of her job.

The grammar school proposal is an example of their different approach. Mrs Shephard is not against grammar schools and strongly supports the remaining 130 as part of the Government's "diversity and choice" package. But the introduction of more grammar schools is not, for

Blackwell plan will not find its way into the manifesto. Mrs Shephard, who once declared nursery vouchers "cumbersome and bureaucratic", was eventually forced by Downing Street to accept them and a pilot scheme begins next month.

There was similar disagreement over John Major's plan to double the assisted-places scheme. Mrs Shephard was persuaded to accept an expansion of the scheme which allows bright pupils from poor homes to attend private schools when Downing Street officials produced figures showing how little it would cost.

A number of the education proposals in Mr Major's Birmingham speech last September are said to have taken her department unaware.

She strongly resisted plans from the policy unit, outlined in the speech, to allow church schools to become grant maintained without a parental ballot. The plans were abandoned earlier this year after fierce opposition from the churches.

Mrs Shephard saw that Downing Street wanted to use the church school issue to accelerate opting out for all schools.

When Downing Street last summer began to examine compulsory opting out for all secondary schools, Mrs Shephard made it clear that she disagreed. Battle was joined in a cabinet committee which even contemplated the abolition of all local authorities. That time, Mrs Shephard won. Opting-out for all was put on the backburner.

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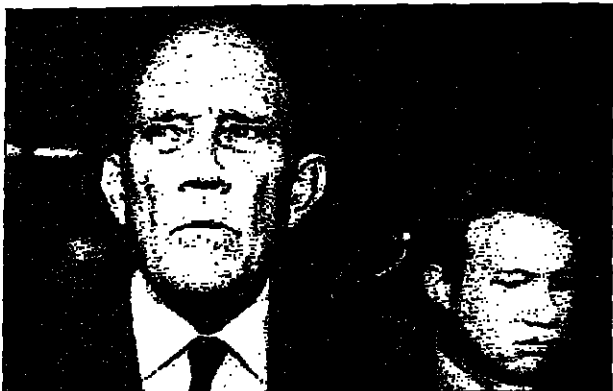
international

Apartheid on trial as Malan faces court

ROBERT BLOCK
Johannesburg

One by one the 20 men, black and white, stood up in the crowded Durban courtroom to proclaim their innocence and deny that they had anything to do with the death squad that gunned down 13 people, mainly women and children, nine years ago. They entered their pleas of not guilty in either Zulu or Afrikaans while protesters and a police armed with a water cannon took up positions outside the court building.

It was a dramatic and fitting opening to what has been billed as South Africa's trial of the decade.



In the dock: General Magnus Malan is charged with conspiracy to murder 13 people. Photograph: Reuters

The trial of the former defence minister General Magnus Malan and 19 co-defendants is not just another murder case. It represents the first time since the advent of black majority rule in South Africa that senior officials in the former white minority governments have been tried for apartheid-era crimes. Perhaps even more significantly, it marks the first attempt to examine in a courtroom how the old regime operated when trying to crush its black opponents.

The prosecutor, the Kwa-Zulu-Natal attorney general, Tim McNally, drew home these points in his opening statement. "The prosecution will cast a shaft of judicial light to

a corner of our history which has hitherto been dark and secret. That process has now begun. It is a process of truth and justice," he told the courtroom.

The charges against General Malan and the others relate to the murder in KwaZulu-Natal on 21 January 1987 of 13 people, five of them children, during a hit-squad-style attack on the home of an anti-apartheid activist linked to President Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC). The target was said to be a youth leader, Victor Ntuli, who was not at the house at the time of the attack and survived only to be killed by assassins three years later.

blacks, through state funding for the Zulu nationalist Inkatha movement, which by then was fighting ANC supporters in the Zulu heartland.

According to the indictment, General Malan and the others set up and trained a paramilitary group for Inkatha, and that members of this force were responsible for what is known as the KwaMakumbi massacre. President Mandela and the ANC have long maintained that the apartheid regimes worked with Inkatha to form what has been called a "third force" to promote black on black violence and destabilise the struggle against white rule.

The first prosecution witnesses in the case, mainly former policemen, were called to the stand yesterday to describe the crime scene. The trial is expected to be both lengthy and expensive. Mr McNally defended the cost of the trial saying that no matter what the price justice has to be served in this particular case.

One figure in particular is expected to loom large over the trial, although he may not ever appear in court: Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the Inkatha leader. The indictments against General Malan detail Chief Buthelezi's role in setting up the paramilitary unit. Court papers indicate that Chief Buthelezi met senior South African military officials on at least four occasions to discuss the formation of the group. The papers said that the men sought to keep their relationship secret because exposure could damage the chief's status as an opponent of apartheid.

Mr McNally declined to charge Chief Buthelezi when he indicted General Malan and the others in December. Ever since then passions around the case have run high. Yesterday was no exception. A large group of Inkatha supporters outside the court chanted and danced protests, near a group of ANC demonstrators. Eventually the police used a water cannon to



Trading places: A Nato plane lands at Sarajevo airport as a Serb truck leaves the suburb of Ilidza which is to be taken over by the Croat-Muslim government today. Photograph: Danilo Krstanovic / Reuters

US to aid Bosnian army with \$100m

The United States said yesterday it planned to give \$100m to help the Muslim-Croat federation in Bosnia build an army able to match the Bosnian Serbs, Reuters reports.

James Pardew, US special representative for Military Stabilisation in the Balkans, said details of the controversial funding would be made available at a conference in Ankara, Turkey, on Friday.

Several European countries have voiced unease over the US "train and equip" project, saying it risked sending the wrong messages and undermining a regional disarmament drive.

"We want to reduce weapons in Bosnia," Mr Pardew said, but added a second way of spreading security was to "improve the quality of a future federation force."

He dismissed European worries, saying the training and equipment would only be available to the federation, the fragile entity on which the long-term success of the Dayton peace accord rests.

He added that a military balance would help ensure the peace accord lasted beyond the end of the year when Nato's 60,000-strong Implementation Force (I-For) left the country, but admitted US policy was based on "a gamble with the federation". He accepted that the federation has yet to create a defence ministry or merge the rival Croat and Muslim armies.

Meanwhile in Sarajevo, Bosnian Serb police set fire to their station, fired pistols in the air and threw hand grenades in a drunken departure from the suburb of Ilidza yesterday.

Civilians ducked behind cars and French Nato troops crouched with weapons ready as a line of cars full of raucous, Serb police drove around the town centre waving a Serb flag. Muslim firemen from near-by Hrasnica, escorted by Nato, quickly put out the station fire.

Other fires also burned in Ilidza, one of two Sarajevo suburbs yet to be transferred from Serb to Muslim-Croat control under the terms of the Dayton accord.

Habsburg seeks right to return

ADRIAN BRIDGE
Central Europe Correspondent

Having successfully defied a ban on entering his native land, Felix Habsburg, the youngest son of the last Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary, yesterday called on the government in Vienna to lift all restrictions on his freedom to return home.

Accompanied by his lawyers, Mr Habsburg, now 79 and the most senior member of the family never to have renounced any claim to the imperial throne, declared that since joining the European Union at the beginning of last year, Austria no longer had the right to bar him from the country.

But he was quick to dash any hopes of monarchists may

have had that he was launching a bid for a Habsburg comeback.

"I have no intention of becoming active politically... I am too old for that," he said. "I also have no intention of calling into question [the fact that Austria is now] a Republic."

Felix Habsburg was less than three years old when his father, Emperor Karl I, was forced to step down and go into exile following defeat in the First World War and the dismembering of the Austro-Hungarian empire that followed.

In the almost 80 years since, he has lived in Portugal, Belgium, the United States and, most recently, Mexico. In all that time, he has only been permitted to return to Austria once, for three days in 1989, to attend the funeral of his mother, Zita. The original law banning Habsburg family members from entering Austria was passed at a time when there were still many in the country who would have supported a restoration of the monarchy and for many years Felix and his two older brothers lived in hope that they would one day receive the call.

After the Second World War, however, most members of the family - most significantly Karl's oldest son and heir, Otto - abandoned such dreams and, in return for renouncing any claim to the throne, or properties, were allowed to visit whenever they wanted.

Unlike his brother Otto, who went on to become a prominent member of the European Parliament, Felix Habsburg never

signed the renunciation and even yesterday said he still had no intention of doing so.

Although he never agreed on the ban, Mr Habsburg had little choice but to obey it until Austria's membership of the European Union last year led to a relaxing of border controls with countries to the west. Indeed, his successful entry to the country was by car from neighbouring Germany, from which he was waved through by a border guard who barely bothered to look at his passport.

Government officials yesterday played down Mr Habsburg's unauthorised visit, which they admitted they had been powerless to prevent. They said they would consider his request to be granted full freedom to travel to Austria.

Monsignor owns up to theft of weeping Madonna

ANDREW GUMBEL
Rome

Monsignor Aldo Rosati has always had a weakness for relics of the Virgin Mary. That certainly explains why he was in Civitavecchia at the weekend, together with a 50-strong group of pilgrims from Bologna, to venerate the plaster statue of the Madonna that hit the headlines last year after it was seen weeping tears of human blood.

And maybe it also explains why, on seeing a copy of the statue in a shrine in the owners' garden, the good Monsignor simply picked it up, put an imitation in its place and walked off with it stashed away in a bag.

Yesterday the city of Civitavecchia, along with the Catholic hierarchy in Bologna, was squirming with embarrassment at the news that a 73-year-old cleric had apparently committed an act of larceny in the name of religious veneration.

Admittedly, Monsignor Rosati did not filch the original weeping Madonna, which sits in a special chapel in the local church behind a screen of bullet-proof glass. But he took the next best thing, a copy blessed by the Pope's special adviser on

miracles, Cardinal Andrzej Deskur, from the garden of the Gregori family which first reported the miraculous weeping. To compound the crime, he also took a stone out of the home-made shrine in which the statue stood.

It didn't take long for the Gregori family to spot the theft since the replacement statue, was badly chipped. The police soon linked the incident to the Bologna pilgrims, and within hours a highway patrol - lights flashing and sirens blaring - had pulled their coach over on the main Rome-Milan motorway near Arezzo.

One by one the passengers were asked to open their bags, until eventually Father Aldo produced the statue of his own accord saying he had taken it with the assent of the Gregori family - a story the Gregoris vigorously deny.

There has been a falling of Italian Catholics ever since the city of Venice stole the body of St Mark from Alexandria in the 8th century. Yesterday, the Bologna Curia did its best to defend Monsignor Rosati, saying he had acted in "absolute good faith" and blaming the media for giving him sleepless nights.

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Forget Sir James Goldsmith the billionaire playboy with a glamorous daughter married to Pakistan's favourite son. Now he has a political mission: to force a referendum on Europe. As **Paul Valley** reports, it is more than an eccentric hobby

Why this man is Major's nightmare

It was a curious collection. In the bowels of La Bournemouth hotel the high priest of parliamentary Euro-scepticism, William Cash, was throwing a private party for a selected few of the hundreds of true believers who had filled the hotel's ballroom for what turned out to be the biggest of the fringe meetings at the Conservative Party conference.

It was a gathering of the hard right. In the centre of the room Norman Tebbit was in conversation with Boris Johnson of the *Daily Telegraph*. In the corner the young historian Andrew Roberts was holding court. But there was no doubt who was the centre of attention. Sir James Goldsmith, the star speaker at the rally. His foray into British politics seems whimsical, a pastime for a rich man grown bored with business.

That was two years ago. Yesterday Sir James bought full-page advertisements in four national newspapers making clear that the referendum idea being floated by the prime minister - on the lone issue of a single currency - would be an "empty gesture". He called for voters to support his new Referendum Party, which is dedicated to a full debate "on the sort of Europe of which Britain wants to be part". Britain has seen oddball fringe parties before. But this is different. The Anglo-French billionaire Member of the European Parliament has vowed to put at least £20m behind his new party, which will put up candidates in every constituency at the next general election where the sitting MP is not committed to a referendum.

Yesterday a Tory party memo revealed that Sir James has a staff of 23 who have processed applications from 1,000 potential candidates, of whom some 300 have been approved. "These candidates are credible; some are former Conservatives and are not fringe nutters," it said. More than that, it has a database of 25,000 supporters and is preparing a direct mail campaign of 30,000 letters in 25 constituencies. It has commissioned a telephone canvassing company, is about to take on a major advertising company and is in discussions with the opinion pollsters MORI.

The party is still grading marginal seats to selecting those it will target. It has already decided to concentrate on Labour marginals with significant Asian communities. But its chief focus will be Conservative seats. Tory MPs in the 90 most marginal seats, those with majorities up to 7,000, are in various states of alarm. They fear that a referendum candidate could cost them 1,000 votes or more and make their seat more vulnerable to a Labour swing. The secret Tory Central Office memo yesterday predicted it could cost the party 25 seats.

The external threat from Sir James, combined with the internal pressures generated by the Euro-sceptics, is finally beginning to pay off. Mr Major, under pressure from his party chairman Brian Mawhinney, is inching towards a referendum to endorse a decision by the Cabinet that Britain should join a single currency. Yet Sir James is not a Euro-sceptic with more money and idiosyncrasies than most. On many issues he holds radically different views. What is as yet unknown, and troubling for Mr Major is just how powerful Sir James could be, not just this week as the Tory party debates what position Britain should take in the forthcoming Inter-Governmental Conference on the future of the European Union, but over the next few months in the run-up to the election.

Sir James Goldsmith is the British version

of the Nineties businessman-turned-politician. America has Steve Forbes, the multi-millionaire presidential candidate, following the path pioneered by Ross Perot. Italy has Silvio Berlusconi and France Bernard Tapie. Certainly Sir James is as formidable an eccentric as any of the others. The son of a Tory MP, he started making money while still at Eton, winning £8,000 on the horses. He went on to make an estimated \$2bn as an international deal maker before deciding that the market was a house of cards and presciently selling most of his companies in 1987 - just before the Wall Street crash.

Sir James is also formidably clever. Like many men who have run large business empires, he likes to deal in apparently simple, sweeping generalisations that could either be profound or mundane. Given his track record as an investor, it's probably worth betting on him being profound.

The political philosophy he developed

A few thoughts on life, the universe and everything

On crusading: "Anyone who has had the good fortune to succeed in business should be prepared to put up their money for a cause that they believe in."

On romance (quoting the French author Sacha Guitry): "When one marries one's mistress, one creates a vacancy."

On the environment: "Both fresh and sea water are being poisoned... and we are living with the threat of up to 40 potential Chernobyls waiting to happen."

On the government: "It's impossible to mediate and incredibly dangerous because it has absolutely no conception of where it wants to go."

On conventional economics: "People tell me that things are much better in England, that there are more washing machines and freezers per family than there used to be. That is an absurd way of measuring contentment, social stability and prosperity."

On the referendum: "England must have the right to vote on things that will change the destiny of the nation. To insist that these changes can come about without thought, without debate and without a vote, is madness. It's sleepwalking into an electric saw."

On Europe: "Imposition of a single currency would unleash centrifugal forces that would tear Europe apart. I am a passionate European. I am also passionately against the present state of the European Union. I am a passionate supporter of this treaty."

On Britain's standing in the world: "They are selling Britain as the Mexico of Europe. So if it was an honour to pay low wages, we've gone mad."

after leaving business was a reaction against the globalisation of markets from which he had profited so hugely and yet which he had begun to suspect would eventually self-destruct. Three years ago he published *The Trap*, a tract arguing against the received wisdom on free trade.

"Global free trade will shatter the way in which value-added is shared between capital and labour... In mature societies, we have been able to develop a general agreement as to how it should be shared... Overnight that agreement will be destroyed by the arrival of huge populations willing to undercut radically the salaries earned by our workforces. The social divisions that this will cause will be deeper than anything ever envisaged by Marx."

The opening up of world trade to the four billion low-wage workers in China and East Asia threatens not just the economic prosperity of the West but its social cohesion, he warned, echoing fashionable communitarian ideas as well as Pat Buchanan's populism. All this has gone down terribly well in France where the protectionist response to "filthy foreigners who pinch our jobs" is far more politically respectable than it

has ever been here. He won a seat in the European Parliament having formed a new party, L'Aure Europe, which secured 13 other MEPs. They have formed an alliance with a Danish and a Dutch MEP to form the anti-federalist Groupe Europe des Nations, of which he is president.

This protectionism is anathema to the right in the UK whose economics have long been steeped in the free-market liberalism of Adam Smith and David Ricardo. Goldsmith is in favour of a European free market surrounded by a tariff wall. He does not share most Euro-sceptics' desire to see Britain as the

"Hong Kong of Europe", competing in the world market unfettered by European regulations. His desire for some strong Euro institutions to supervise joint foreign, defence and environmental policies has provoked public fury from Conservative anti-Europeans and the rival Euro-sceptic UK Independence Party, whose leader Dr Alan Sked dismissed

seats. No wonder that the Prime Minister is calculating how much he will have to concede to Sir James's guns.

His strategy is as yet unknown. Most commentators think Goldsmith & Co might win on a single currency referendum but lose a more general referendum on European integration as the public's irritation with Brussels would be outweighed by its collective fear of being left behind by the rest of Europe.

Those who have worked closely with him in the past insist that the man is an acute strategist. "There will be a strategic goal," said one confidant hopefully, before conceding he had no idea what it was.

One possibility, some associates venture, is that the Referendum Party is merely a tactic in a longer-term strategy to re-orientate the right after a split in the Tory Party. Goldsmith's aim then would be to bring part of the party over to protectionism so that the kind of debate which is going on among US Republicans could become respectable here. Not since Oswald Mosely has a mainstream British politician flirted with such thoughts. Others are more disdainful.

Echoing Kenneth Clarke's dismissal of Goldsmith as an eccentric millionaire, who lives in Paris and Mexico, and who should not be interfering in British politics, they describe him as a piqued maverick who just operates on whim. "He's clever and shrewd on one level," said one doubter yesterday, "he's formidable intellectually but he lacks political common sense". It will yet be some time before it is clear which of the verdicts history might pass.

Either way, as John Major charts a way to keep his warring fractious party together a complication on the scale of Sir James is something he could probably have done without.



DIARY

It could be you, if there's room...

I have discovered the real reason why the Arts Lottery Board has a reputed administrative backlog of three months' paperwork (There are some 628 applications pending, even though

466 awards were made last year, according to a report in last week's *Arts Management Weekly*.) The hold-up is not because, as has been reported, the board has been inundated with far more applicants than anticipated. It is, I'm afraid, to do with a far more immediate problem in the office. You couldn't swing a half, let alone a whole cat between desks, apparently - even in the classy office assigned to the Arts Council chief, Lord Gower.

The building in Great Peter Street, near Victoria, is simply too cramped to recruit the much-needed extra staff. For three months now the board has been unable to carry out its recruitment plans (it tended to take on 20 extra bodies) on account of the cramped conditions. But now, I am pleased to say, the situation has been resolved.

"We are extending the third floor," explains spokeswoman for the Arts Council (whose premises the board is located). "Education is moving up from the third floor to the fourth and finance is moving out of the building altogether. We're going to have much more space and we are currently advertising the 30 vacancies."

Phew.

Lunches Labours lost?

Mathews a few of the Labour MPs who have offices in the parliamentary outbuilding known as Shaw South (in Whitehall, away from Tony Blair in the Palace of Westminster) do not have

enough to do. At least, that is the only explanation I can come up with for three of them writing some very banal comments in a book chained to the new vending machines erected in a room off their corridor. I'm sure their constituents will be pleased to note that Audrey Wise, the MP for Preston, laments the lack of Snickers and shortbread while Keith Hill, MP for Streatham, is irritated by the loss of his £1 coin. However, one happy customer, John Denham, MP for Southampton Itchen, is prepared to stand out from the crowd. "I don't want to be a creep but I think the range of food is much better."

I do so hope somebody finds their comments useful.

Wolf in camp clothing

I was startled to see an unlikely symbol of male campiness pop up in Ken Rus-

sell's production of *Salome's Last Dance*, shown on Channel 4 on Sunday night.

The film, based on Oscar Wilde's banned play *Salome* - it has a homosexual subtext - is set in a male brothel. So far so good. But I nearly spat my cocoa when I spotted a familiar face, standing in the shadows next to young gold-painted slave boys. It was none other than *Gladiators*' most macho, virile fighter - Wolf.

Wolf, who in everyday life goes by the name of Michael Van Wijk, thrives on his image as the aggressive gladiator most likely to terrify the kids and bully the other competitors on the Saturday night show. I imagine his role in the Russell film, made in 1987 in which he wears a leather G-string and mimes around as a Roman soldier, is not

something he cares to publicise. Indeed, when I rang the *Gladiators* press office to inquire about it, this seemed to be the case. "This is a private matter for Mr Van Wijk," said a spokesman firmly. I didn't like to remind him that the programme had been broadcast to the entire country the previous evening.

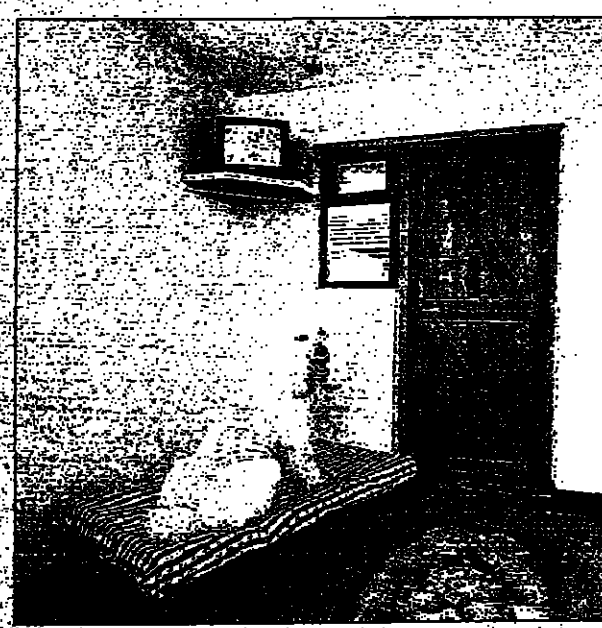
Booming ridiculous

So what happens when the UN Secretary General, Boutros Boutros Ghali, puts the Environment Secretary, John Gummer, on a panel of "internationally eminent persons" to plan a major UN conference on the environment later this year? This panel met in New York yesterday and our globe-trotting Secretary of State decided to get there by the fastest, most expensive and most ungreen-possible method. Concorde.

Eagle Eye

What no double rooms? It's a dog's life

When you're in the country, it's being asked to accommodate all animals. Mrs. Pumphrey, you may recall, is the fictional character in *Just William's* *All Creatures Great and Small* who does everything on her absurdly small poodle, Lucky Woof. Nobody, I realize, I had fondly imagined, would ever really need a dog like that. But times, I suppose, have changed. On 1 May, a kennel will open near Cambridge offering dogs a complete package with TV, remote control, a proper bed with mattress, a rug and a picture of a fellow pet. There is also a bath, in case any of the guests feel ill. And, of course, the owner of the kennel, Third Bridge Farm, says that she is not, as has been said, a dog lover. "I have bred and shown poodles for years," she says proudly. "I would never send one of my own dogs to kennels. A dog is used to TV, to carpets, and to central heating. It's very cruel to deprive them of those things." All humans inspired by my picture opposite might wish to know that the charge for one night's stay is £10 - and I intend to book in pronto under the surname Rover.



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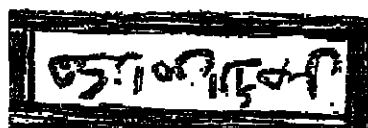
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Thorny bouquet for small business

The Prime Minister is worried about small businesses, as well he might, given the political mess his ministers have made of the issue in recent weeks. His initiatives yesterday were a welcome sign of interest in a vital part of the economy. But it did not get near offering a serious new approach to fostering small businesses amid the uncertainty of the Nineties and so it will not shore up the Tory party's battered relationship with the swelling entrepreneurial classes.

Recent ministerial pronouncements on small businesses have been clumsy. First the Deputy Prime Minister, Michael Heseltine, appeared to endorse late payment of bills. Then persistent questioning from Labour's Barbara Roche revealed that government departments were delaying payments to contractors. Finally last week we discovered that members of the Cabinet were squabbling over Michael Heseltine's desire to remove employment rights from anyone working for small businesses.

Given this backdrop, the Prime Minister's soothing words of affection for small businesses were politically timely. His strongest new recommendation – to shame businesses out of late payment – is a sensible measure. If companies are forced to publish their payment record alongside their accounts, some may be embarrassed into settling up on time. The Government should consider going further. Giving firms a statutory right to claim interest on late payments, or making it easier to pursue their debtors through the courts might prove more effective.

Beyond this however, there was little in Mr Major's speech to resolve the contradictions in the Government's treatment of small businesses. The Prime Minister restated his determination to "bite rules"

which burden businesses. Yet at the same time some policy changes in the last few months will do exactly the opposite. The Asylum Bill, for example, will force all employers to investigate the immigration status of their workers.

Moreover deregulation is not always good for business. Mr Major was right to resist Mr Heseltine's proposal on employment rights: allowing small firms to indulge in discrimination is not the way to promote competition. Government has a positive role to play too. Small businesses have genuine and distinctive needs. Their relatively small turnover and insignificant market power makes them more vulnerable to the changing behaviour of the economy, larger firms and the government. They need distinctive measures of support. Small businesses have serious trouble finding the skilled staff they need – and they rely far more than larger companies on government training and education policies to help them solve the problem.

Finding a coherent and effective approach to the problems of small businesses is important to the Government's political position. Small business owners have long been a traditional bedrock of support for the Conservative Party. But the composition of the self-employed is changing. In the past, owners of small businesses were predominantly the sons of other small business owners. Changes in the labour market, including higher unemployment, downsizing and sub-contracting, mean that the self-employed today are a more diverse and less predictable group of people. Warm words about traditional Tory values, and the importance of the market are no longer sufficient to capture small business votes. Mr Major will need something more substantial to win them over.

Resisting the roar of the dragon

When the world's two greatest military powers manoeuvre menacingly in a narrow stretch of sea around a disputed island only the foolhardy would argue that there was nothing to be worried about. Every sensible analysis suggests that Peking will rattle its missiles at Taiwan but that it will not risk a conflict.

However, this is not a moment for the West to rest on its laurels. Indeed, it is vital that it responds to China's bullying threats by laying down its own, measured marker of how it will react. For what is at stake in this escalating war of words, gestures and threats is not only the outcome of Taiwan's forthcoming elections but the terms under which China will exert its growing power in Asia, after the demise of its ageing leader Deng Xiaoping.

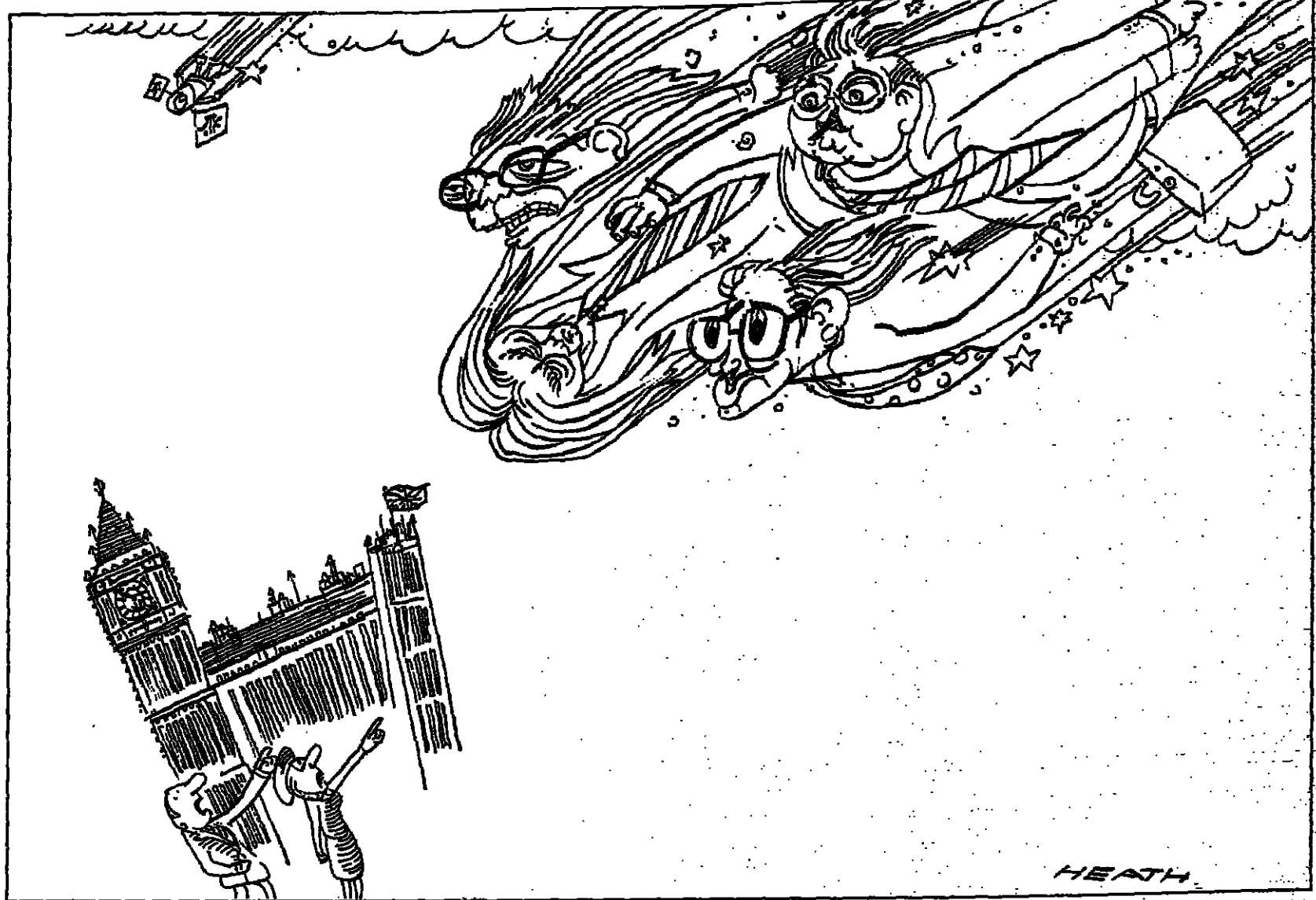
The attacks on Taiwan seem inseparable from the power struggle over the succession to Deng. For thousands of years Chinese leaders have stood, and sometimes fallen, on their ability to uphold the "Unity of the Motherland". With Deng Xiaoping clinging to life but not quite to power, the supreme-leader-in-waiting, President Jiang Zemin, is understandably anxious not to show any sign of weakness towards the notion of an independent Taiwan. He has to contend with, and propitiate, ageing generals, flexing their ageing muscles and ageing attitudes.

The forthcoming first open presidential elections, which will confirm the mandate of Lee Teng-hui, who is formally committed to independence,

appears to have infuriated the Chinese. As we have seen in Hong Kong, China regards democracy as an infectious disorder best kept far from its borders. Meanwhile, Mr Lee's campaign for a Taiwanese seat at the UN is calculated to annoy Peking.

In the context of this vicious quarrel between potentially volatile neighbours the Clinton administration was right to strengthen the US naval presence in the area. It may also diplomatically remind China that the West has no "selfish" interests in Taiwan and will not encourage a desire for independence, yet it could not stand by if Taiwan were attacked. Taiwan may not be recognised as a separate state but this warmongering is not an issue internal to China. Taiwan is vulnerable precisely because it is caught in that limbo land short of full statehood. It is convenient for the West that it should be kept there, for that eases Western trade with China. In return, Taiwan has every right to expect our support.

Most importantly, with Western investment running at £65m a day, the West must remind China that war and instability could seriously hamper investment. The days are gone when Peking could behave like a surly dragon, occasionally popping its head out of a cave of self-imposed isolation to roar defiance. The West must not escalate the tension by intervening directly, but it must make its presence felt for as long as China continues to threaten.



'It's the Tory Party and it's breaking up!'

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Cloning a nightmare for sheep – and farmers

Sir: While the science media rejoice over the Nuffield Council's green light for pig-human organ transplants and eulogise the creation of cloned sheep at Edinburgh, animal welfareists despair (reports, 7 March, 11 March).

What of the suffering of the breeding sow – her uterus extracted so that the transgenic piglets can be "born" into a sterile bubble? What of the pigs themselves, reared in ultra-hygienic laboratory conditions, when in a natural environment they would spend over half their time rooting in the soil with their highly sensitive snouts.

As for the sheep, each of these cloned lambs is the result of four separate surgical operations on the donor and recipient ewes. Surgery for science and profit, not for therapeutic or even prophylactic purposes. And now we discover that the researchers failed to publish the fact that some of the cloned lambs suffered from "giantism" and congenital abnormalities of their internal organs.

Nor should we forget the farmer's nightmare scenario – a field of cloned sheep all identically vulnerable to the same strain of disease.

Why is it that a moral worth is attributed to scientific research per se?

Is it not time that we stopped and asked ourselves not, "Can

this be done?" but rather, "Should we be doing this at all?"

JOYCE D'SILVA
Compassion in World
Farming
Petersfield, Hampshire

Sir: While vague and implausible references are made to possible reductions in human disease, the main gainers from cloning research are clearly the profit-seeking farming and pharmaceutical industries, which are rejoicing in the idea of producing animals who carry more "lean meat" and less fat, and are more resistant to disease.

Yet ewes are already struggling for life as they are pressured to produce not one but as many as five lambs, and to give birth as early as December. Surely creating ewes with less protective fat can only diminish their chances of survival. Already 4 million lambs (15-20 per cent of the total born) die every year within a few days of birth.

BECKY SMITH
Animal Aid
Tonbridge, Kent

Sir: Professor Albert Weal's comment (report, 7 March) that "xenotransplantation promises much" has a hollow ring. Not one xenograft patient has survived more than a matter of months since the first operation in 1964. Despite years of "research" costing millions of pounds and count-

less animal lives – vivisection is no closer to making this Frankenstein science a reality. Animal-to-human transplants are always fatal for both human and animal victim.

A single xenograft operation costs over £150,000 now, taking funds away from real public health initiatives. The millions wasted on xenotransplants could more usefully be used to encourage human donors to come forward. It would only take another 2,000 donations every year from a population of 56 million. A human organ must give a human being a better chance of survival and it removes the risk of diseases crossing the species barrier – a horror story waiting to happen.

PAUL GAYNOR
People for the Ethical
Treatment of Animals
London NW1

Sir: Your welcome to the life-saving pig (leading article, 7 March) comes a little late. The animal has been of service to sick humans for more than 20 years.

By the early 1970s plastic surgeons were using pigskins in the treatment of serious burns. The animal's carefully treated skin was found to have several advantages over the man-made dressings. Pain was reduced, so too was fluid loss and shock; there was less chance of infection and a much greater chance of quick healing.

ROBIN LAURENCE
Beaconsfield, Bucks

Don't rush into a referendum

Sir: The Conservative Party's response to the perceived threat of Sir James Goldsmith's Referendum Party is hasty and mistaken.

Hasty, and clearly an over-reaction, is the Government's present flirtation with a referendum on the issue of a single currency (report 11 March). This will certainly not be enough to buy off James Goldsmith. He wants a referendum now, allowing the public a retrospective vote on the Maastricht treaty and Britain's relationship with the European Union, not a hypothetical promise of a referendum if and when Britain joins the single currency.

There is no evidence yet put

forward that either the electorate is crying out for a referendum or the electoral impact of the Referendum Party will be anything greater than that of the UK Independence Party at the last election.

The Government should take clear and decisive control of its European policy rather than appealing other political parties or even its own debar Euro-sceptics, who will not be happy until Britain has left the European Union.

ANDREW RED
Girton College,
Cambridge
The writer is the president of the
Young Conservative Group in
Europe

Unfair burden on employers

Sir: If a person provides employment to a worker for one day then the employer is seen as doing the worker a good turn and is in no way under an obligation to that worker. One might assume that if the employer provided employment for a longer period (say five years), then he would be seen as doing the worker an even better turn and not under any obligation to the worker.

That is not the case. The employer is expected to assume all sorts of responsibilities, some very onerous indeed, thus dis-

couraging the hiring of staff ("Dories clash over pay to scrap job rights", 8 March).

If society, and the government which represents it, holds that workers should be paid by commission when doing their jobs then the government and taxpayers should foot the bill, a fact such an arrangement would cost the taxpayers nothing. The economy would be stimulated while reducing the cost of unemployment pay.

R. G. SIMMONSON
London W4

The real transport choice is a choice not to travel

Sir: Graham Allen's assurance that the next Labour government will create "an infrastructure that will give people transport choices" (letter, 7 March) is laudable in itself, but ignores the core transport problem, which is the enormous growth in total movement of both people and goods, by whatever means of transport.

For example, the average item of food travels 50 per cent further from producer to household than it did 10 years ago. Similar changes have occurred in almost every field of production, all rep-

resented by proportional increases in lorry mileages. People also travel ever further to work, to shop, and in their leisure activities. Only a small part of this is because of increases in personal freedoms and choices. Most is the result of planning decisions, both by public bodies and by manufacturers, distributors and retailers. Time and again the decision is made that it will be cheaper to close down a factory (shop, office, school, depot, court-house, blood transfusion centre) and let people travel to a new big central one.

Of course, it is not cheaper for the country. The cost is simply transferred to someone else, such as the government or council that builds the roads, or the customers and workers who have to spend more time, money and nervous energy travelling, and all of us who have to suffer the resulting congestion and degraded environment.

A sensible transport policy must start by asking not how we move people and goods about but how we can avoid having to.

CHRISTOPHER PADLEY
Market Rasen, Lincolnshire

Scottish doctors doubt MS drug

Sir: The Scottish Office Department of Health has not decreed that beta interferon may not be prescribed by Scottish neurologists, nor would it ever do so ("The price of health and the doctor's dilemma", 11 March).

Whether or not to prescribe a licensed preparation has to be a clinical decision by the doctor concerned.

What did happen was that I received a letter in November last year, signed by all 25 consultant neurologists in Scotland, expressing the view that "there is not enough evidence to recommend this drug to MS patients in routine clinical practice" mainly because the only published random allocation trial of the drug did not show that it produced any reduction in cumulative disability.

The same view was subsequently expressed by the directors of public health of the 15 Scottish health boards, and, I understand, is shared by many neurologists working in other parts of the UK.

Dr R E KENDALL
Chief Medical Officer
Department of Health
The Scottish Office
St Andrew's House,
Edinburgh

Blair offers peers a mess of pottage

Sir: Tony Blair ("A lifetime of lunch without peer", 11 March) asks hereditary peers to give up their speaking rights in return for keeping lunching and dining rights at the House of Lords. He is literally asking us to sell our birthright for a mess of pottage.

This does no more than confirm me in my opinion that he is a smooth man.

Were he to ask me to sell my birthright for a House of Commons elected by a voting system that makes it truly representative of the people he might get a different answer. After all, that is my birthright too.

EARL RUSSELL
House of Lords
London SW1
The writer is Liberal Democrat
spokesman on Social Security

War on crime

Sir: There is a terrifying corollary to Lord Taylor's very persuasive argument (report, 7 March) that criminals who risk mandatory life sentences for repeating certain crimes may be tempted to kill their victims where those are the sole witnesses. It is that previously law-abiding people may try to kill real, or imagined, assailants in pre-emptive self-defence. Criminals may therefore go more prepared and/or armed to kill their victims.

CLIVE GRIFFITHS
London N16

Enfants terribles

Sir: The idea of child-free zones (Simon Calder's travel column, 9 March) sounds wonderful. Air flights are a good starting point, but the principle could be extended to other areas of life: a ban on parents with children in supermarkets at certain times of day springs immediately to mind.

ADAM WATSON
Quenington, Gloucestershire

Education means skills for life

Sir: Your report "A-level exams will be made harder to pass" (6 March) will not make encouraging reading, either for future sixth-formers or for those interested in the country's prosperity.

Examinations ought to be rigorous. But to rank subjects in degrees of difficulty is unhelpful, and only widens the traditional academic-vocational divide. Other important questions concerning A-levels need to be discussed. The two key issues are failure and drop-out rates.

High-quality guidance well before post-16 choice must point out the credible alternatives, including the GNVQ route, which many more admissions tutors and employers are welcoming.

In addition, skills must complement academic access. The acquiring of skills must begin well before 16, as should the realisation by pupils of all ages that they have responsibility for their own learning. The lifelong learning process has to begin in schools. Successful companies regard such an approach as essential in future employees.

JOAN ONE
Head of Educational Services
The Industrial Society
Birmingham

German answer

Sir: At last, the definitive reasons for the League of Nations failing in the 1930s (Andrew Marr, 7 March). Had all in Europe learnt German and seen the superiority of Germany's culture and economy, war could so easily have been avoided.

NICK REES
Gwernefield, Cwtyd

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, and include daytime telephone numbers. (Fax: 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk) Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Just a minute, am I repeating myself?

The other day I was in the foyer of Broadcasting House in London's Upper Regent Street, headquarters of BBC radio, and I picked up a blue piece of paper that said: "Faint, how should that say? A new panel game all about the use of language. Chairman, Alan Coren, with panellists Barry Cryer, Willie Rushton, Kevin Day and Lorelei King. Monday 18 March, 1996. For FREE tickets send SAE to..."

Now, this may well turn out to be an excellent programme, but that was not my immediate thought. My immediate reaction was one of sorrow and sympathy for the people who have to think up new ideas for quiz programmes when, quite obviously, there aren't any, and also new guests for panel games when there don't seem to be any.

Somewhere upstairs at the BBC there is a room with a committee in session behind locked doors (not to preserve secrecy but to stop them escaping) whose members have a day in, day out discussion that goes something like this...

"I say, Controller, I read somewhere the other day that people are getting interested in the correct use of language again. Why, even the Reith Lectures this year were all about it. Why don't we have a new quiz on the use of language?"



MILES KINGTON

"Because, for God's sake, it's been done. Remember *Wordly Wise*?"

"Well, let's do it again."

"It's been done again. *Word of Mouth*."

"No, I don't think that was a quiz game. That was a serious programme, actually looking at language."

"Bit of a waste of time having a serious programme on a subject that might be better used for a quiz, don't you think?"

"Well, sir, the fact is that all possible subjects for quizzes have now been used up. We've done films, radio, quotations, music, business, books, history..."

"History?"

"Yes, sir. There's a quiz on at the moment where historians have to answer questions on a subject such as Alfred the Great or Queen Victoria. History as gossip. Rather good, actually."

"Oh, is that a quiz programme? I heard that. I thought it was *Start the Week* about Melvyn Bragg. Well, it certainly explains why they were awarding each other points, which doesn't ever happen on *Start the Week*."

"On the contrary, *Start the Week* is all about point-scoring. Did you not hear Tony Parsons and Melvyn Bragg the other week? I remember thinking that I had stumbled into a new panel game that I had devised and then forgotten about..."

"Quite so. Incidentally, will someone remind me of the difference between a panel game and a quiz game?"

"Yes, sir. In a quiz game it helps to answer the question correctly. A panel game is one where the answers don't matter as long as they are funny, and where nobody cares about the points. The *News Quiz* is actually a panel game, for instance."

"That can't be true. I think the answers are very important on *The News Quiz*. I have heard much better political points made by people such as Jeremy Hardy on *The News Quiz* than any of the falling around on *Any Questions*. Which, despite its name, is not a quiz or a panel game."

"Do you think it should be? Do you think it would come back to life if

Jonathan Dimbleby started awarding points for answers? And deducting points for evading the question?"

"Excellent idea. But we've got a political quiz on Radio 4 already."

"Have we? What's it called?"

"I can't remember, but it's got Austin Mitchell and Julian Critchley on it. Or if it hasn't, it should have..."

"Tell you what. Why don't we have a quiz programme about itself? It would be called, *As I Was Saying*, and the panel would be asked questions in the second half about what had been said in the first half."

"It wouldn't be the first quiz about itself. There's that weird programme with Irene Thomas and all those other people which is so clever and inbred that they have to guess what the question means before they can applaud themselves for answering it."

"I say, Controller, why don't we have a quiz programme about the use of language? The Reith Lectures this year – oh no, I've said that already..."

"Oh no, I've said that already. Actually, that's not a bad idea for a programme. A game in which you are penalised for repeating yourself..."

"We've got one. It's called *Just A Minute*."

"Well, how about..."

The discussion continues.



comment

Go on Tony, make my day

The creation of more public holidays and other such wheezes mean more to the voter than the PSBR

Tony Blair's furrowed-brow lectures about government's hard choices and the need for strict priorities are, no doubt, sensible. But they are not cheerful. They add to the impression that life under Labour would be, in too many ways, just like life under the Conservatives. So Mr Blair has asked his shadow cabinet for "no cost/low cost measures" which could be passed early without clogging up Parliament.

A pejorative way of putting it is to say that he wants gimmicks. But gimmicks, or pleasing wheezes, should not be underrated. Outside Northern Ireland, John Major has probably had more positive influence on people's lives by setting up the National Lottery and deregulating pub hours than with the rest of his legislation put together. The idea that politicians might do things to make people happier may be novel, but it shouldn't be rejected out of hand.

So what might such a list include? Policy wonks are working and think-tanks are bubbling. MPs, such as Chris Mullin, have published their thoughts. But this is a game anyone can play. Here, hoping to kick off a conversation, are 10 reforms I'd like to see.

Dynastic Night. The National Lottery rules would be changed to ensure that, every month or so, some money raised would be used to blow up a hated building. Most British cities are disfigured by some architecture that actually makes people feel worse when they pass it. Examples can even be found in cities such as Edinburgh, which are otherwise near-perfect, and in smaller gems such as Ludlow, Norwich and

Shrewsbury. Destroying them would raise our spirits and give a greater sense of popular control over urban environments. The buildings would be chosen by local ballot. Any that attracted, say, 20 per cent local support would, however, be saved as a safeguard against anti-modern philistinism.

Speaking French. Making a closer union of the peoples of Europe is not something that will be accomplished by politicians. We will be bound together by shared work, inter-marriage and travel, or not at all. There are no EU proposals from any British party that would do half as much good as trying to ensure that all children left school truly fluent in another European language.

Trafalgar Square should be pedestrianised, as the first stage of a plan to close other chunks of central London to cars. Global warming will ensure a ready market for open-air eating in the capital's prime central spaces. (But avoid the pigeon *en croule*.)

The February problem. We don't have enough public holidays and those we do have are clustered together. The real need is for something to cheer up February, that grim runt among the months. St Valentine's Day helps some people, but depresses many others. It should be our celebratory Mardi Gras, a day when we try to slough off our national puritanism, revel in public bawdy and wild parties. (This is a very non-new Labour thought, but that, perhaps, is part of new Labour's problem.)

National Art Scandals. Britain's great art collections include hundreds of paintings and sculptures that are



ANDREW MARR

We need to cheer up February, that grim runt among months

hidden from view, either in government offices or in gallery basements, because there isn't enough space to show them. They should be sent around the country, to smaller galleries and the foyers of company offices, to be properly enjoyed. Some would be stolen. But since no one sees them at the moment anyway, that wouldn't matter too much.

The Wildwood. This is the name of a dream, the remaking of truly wild forest in northern Scotland. Wildwood was described by Neal Ascherson as "something shaggy and trackless... a green universe into which men and women can go to become lost children in a fairy story". Only slightly more prosaically, various ecological trusts and conservationists are hoping for Millennium Commission money to replant parts of the ancient Caledonian Forest. But there is much more that government could do. It could finally make the

Cairngorms a World Heritage Site. It could end the oddity of Scotland having no national parks. Above all, it could set limits on foreign ownership of land, as other countries do, to keep the prices of estates in reach of environmental bodies, and our dreams.

Domesday Britain. We could collect, communally by community, a vast amount of Britain in the year 2000, organised by volunteers. Unlike the original Domesday Book, it wouldn't list our cattle, churches and pastures, but our hopes, fears and private achievements. Personal testimonies would be stitched together to make a patchwork "living novel" of the British now. This would rest in local libraries to be read - or forgotten - by future generations.

Going Asian. The twinning of towns and villages is fine so far as it goes. But that is a merely European affair. If this is to be an Asian century, should we not twin Britain with an Asian nation? South Korea, with its 45 million people, would be an obvious candidate. We have a lot to learn from them, and they from us. It's poorer than Britain but, with growth of around 8.5 per cent a year, is catching up fast. Some may object about the Korean habit of eating dogs but given the gross over-supply of domestic dogs here, there are surely deals to be done.

Honours and Dishonours. The most popular part of the British honours system has nothing to do with Knight Grand Crosses, Baths or Empires; it is the *Today* programme's man or woman of the year award. But, like the other honours system, this is in grave danger of being discredited by the Conserva-

tive Party, widely suspected of organising phone-in campaigns. Instead, Blair could come to a deal with the BBC: it would organise a proper ballot and, in return, he would give the winners and runners-up seats in the House of Lords. This would be democratic, cheerful and costless.

Mark. That last reform could also, of course, produce new Tony peers. But such Labour generosity cannot be taken too far, a list such as this ought to include the odd act of random political spite - something, as it were, to even up the score for the abolition of the GLC. One very popular such measure would be to strip Mark Thatcher of the baronetcy he is due to inherit from his father. Debetrets tell me this would only be possible if Parliament declared him guilty of high treason first, which might seem a trifle harsh. Can intensely irritating the nation be properly regarded as treason? I think so. The whole, it should be, and the expense of parliamentary time is something we could put up with.

This has been a short personal list. Yes, it excludes many weightier measures Labour has promised. Yes, it deliberately skipped round the most contentious issues and yes - all right - it's frivolous at the edges. I also tried to avoid bawling things because politicians are already over-acted to that.

So it is only a start. But there is still a little more to radical politics than the PSBR, and Labour is in danger of taking itself too seriously, of becoming the buttoned-up, "can't do that" party. It is a depressing prospect: rather than submit, we should bombard it with wheezes.

Rats fearing a sinking ship

A herd instinct among investors accounts for yesterday's stock market jitters, says Robin Aspinall

Yesterday's abrupt fall in the UK stock market has been met with a number of explanations ranging from the conventional to the weird and wonderful.

There are those who swear by such unlikely influences as sunspot activity and astrology. Take, for instance, the fact that the Chinese Year of the Rat has just begun. Everyone knows that the Year of the Rat is "ruled by the cold of winter and the darkness of night" and that it is typified by wild market fluctuations. You have been warned.

More routine is the recognition that markets are driven by investor psychology. In late 1986, the FT-SE 100 index burst out of the doldrums to produce a rally of 62 per cent before it peaked in July 1987. We all know what happened after that: the stock market crashed.

That 62 per cent is one of the magic numbers discovered by a 13th-century Italian monk called Fibonacci. It seems to have a remarkably powerful and widely recognised significance for the way that markets work. Take, for example, Nasdaq, which is now the busiest US stock market. On the 23 February, the Nasdaq index touched a level that represented a 62 per cent gain from the important low that it reached in mid-1994. It has not regained that level since. A few people at least may have read the worst from the omens. When the markets in the US grew shaky, those who are prepared to combine the musings of a 13th-century monk with the implications of a Chinese year sign would not have been surprised.

These weird theories aside, however, the reason for London's weaknesses is in fact painfully simple. London fell because Wall Street fell. But, that merely begs the next question: "What went wrong on Wall Street?"

One theory is that the problem lies in the US economy: it appears to be doing too well. Bill Clinton is probably over the moon. After all, it isn't every day that you discover - as he did last Friday - that your economy has created more than 700,000 new jobs. That was roughly double the increase that the market had been expecting. Then, apparently in defiance of commonsense, the US stock market went into an instant tailspin.

There is, however, a rational explanation, namely the fear raised by the figures, that strong growth could cause the economy to overheat and so

lead to a build-up of inflationary pressure.

This economic "explanation" sounds plausible, but there are one or two problems with it. Above all, the evidence of a rebound in growth and inflation is far from convincing. Other economic indicators suggest that the 705,000 figure is a freak.

The real answer may well lie closer to the markets' home. The trouble is that at the beginning of the year the markets had all reached the same conclusion at the same time: growth would be subdued; inflation would not be a problem; the dollar would be strong; interest rates would continue to fall.

Most of those assumptions

The world and his dog started buying bonds like there was no tomorrow

were probably right. That was not the problem. The problem arose from the unanimity. When investors form a view they quite naturally act on it; and the natural thing to do was to buy bonds, especially US bonds. The world and his dog started buying US Treasury Bonds like there was no tomorrow.

This enormous appetite for bonds naturally drove their prices upwards. But, when a bandwagon is that full, there is sure to be trouble. There is no one left to get on board, and without that additional demand, prices begin to sag. That is exactly what started happening during January. All around the world, bond prices began to fall. Only gently at first, but that was enough put immense pressure on those people who had bought bonds with borrowed money. They were forced to sell, adding to the downward pressure. And, by last Friday, the bond markets were full of investors who had become worried about their investments. When that US employment statistic was published, they were ready to panic.

So the truth behind the sell-off may be almost as bizarre as the wacky theories involving the Chinese New Year. What the last few days have demonstrated - yet again - is that it is as easy to lose money on the markets by being right as it is by being wrong.

The author is chief economist at stockbrokers Panmure Gordon.

Between the living and the dead

We don't understand the brain, so how can we decide whether coma patients live? By William Hartston

A brain-damaged accident victim who had been in a coma for two years uses his little finger to tap out a message telling the police that his injuries were the result of an assault. Another man, unconscious for six months and almost abandoned as brain dead not only makes a complete recovery, but demonstrates that he had been aware of what was happening to him throughout the ordeal. An American policeman, shot in the head in 1988, suddenly speaks after seven and a half years in a coma.

Any one of these cases could have come from the plot of a feature film, yet each was the basis of a news item in the past three weeks. Together they show how much we have still to learn about the functioning of the human

Coma patients have felt injections and understood what was being said to them

brain, and emphasise the elusive nature of any understanding of consciousness. Most of all, they show how difficult is the decision to allow a person, apparently devoid of all mental or physical sensation, to die with dignity, when there just might be an infinitesimal chance of a miracle recovery.

We all have a good idea of what consciousness is: an awareness of one's own existence, and an ability to react to one's surroundings. Unconsciousness, however, poses more of a problem, with a continuum stretching from sleep through anaesthesia and coma to persistent vegetative state and brain death. All unconscious states are characterised by insensitivity to one's environment; what differentiates one such state from another are the degree and cause of that insensitivity and the ease with which it may be reversed.

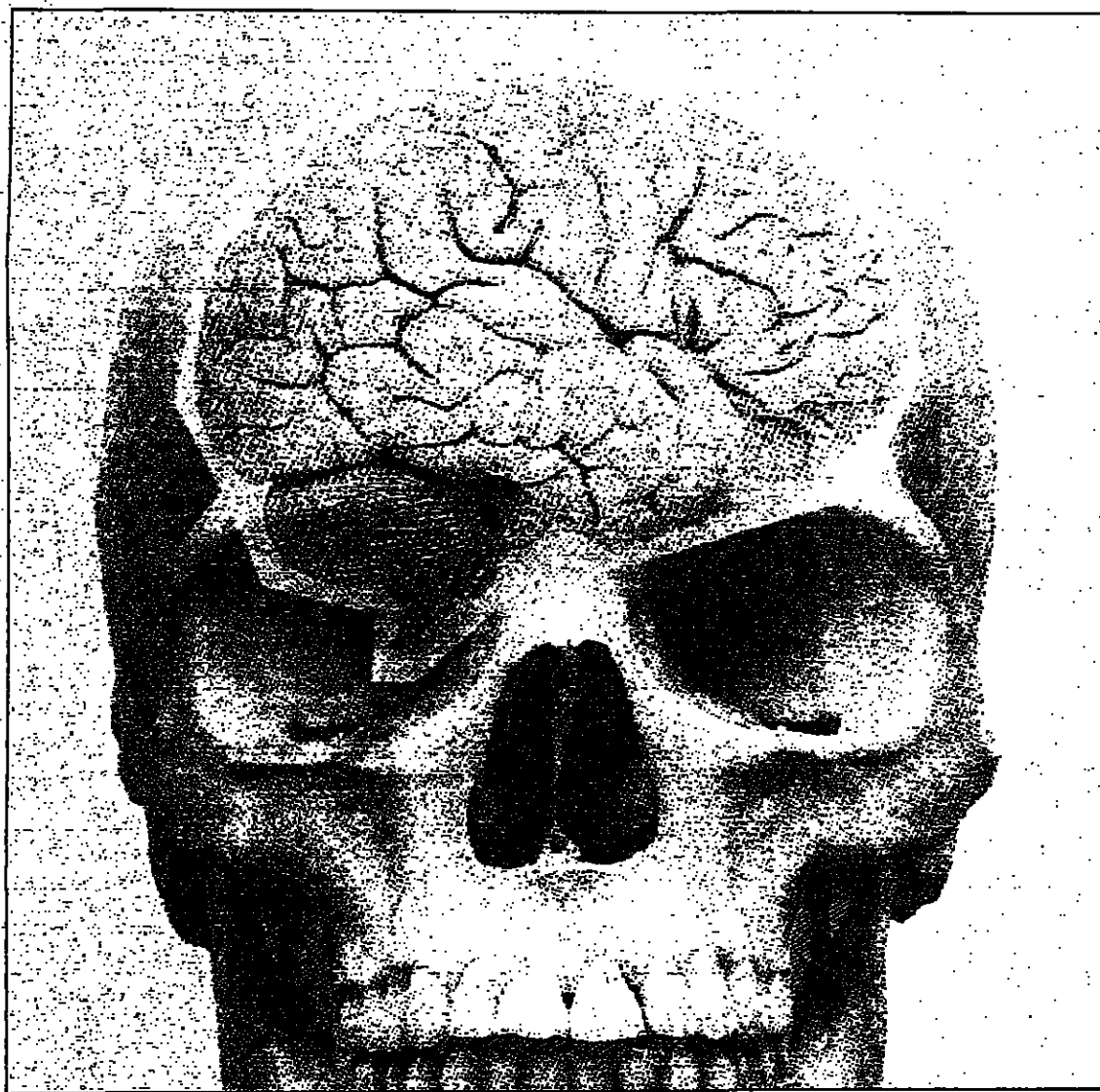
When we are asleep, a loud noise, pain, or even the sudden silence of a clock stopping may be enough to wake us up. We clearly have a low level of perception of our environment - somehow aware of it, but not enough to register anything unless it breaks through a certain barrier level.

Anaesthesia, or inhibition in animals, is a deeper level of unconsciousness. Induced by chemical changes - whether natural or through external intervention - they are states in which any amount of shouting or injury may produce no reaction. But the state is still reversible, again by chemical changes, natural or induced.

Any recovery from a coma, however, may be quite unpredictable.

Invitations to appear on *Desert Island Discs* have always been accepted with great alacrity. How nice it is to be interviewed in your own right, a person deemed to be worthy of paradise, and to invite the listeners into your own "private" world. But such invitations will now be considered with concern after Sue Lawley's grilling of the Shadow Chancellor, Gordon Brown.

As the sea washed over sun-drenched sands, Gordon's remarks quickly became a nightmare. His marital status was uppermost in Sue's mind. Why was he not married, she asked persistently. Straying into the realms of tabloid prurience, Sue over-reached her remit. After all, it was not



Cerebral issues: coma patients expose how little we know about consciousness

Montage: Mark Hayman

Characterised by a complete lack of reaction to external stimuli, and often associated with brain injury, a coma is the deepest state of unconsciousness. The brain continues functioning sufficiently to keep the body alive, but perhaps no more. No voluntary movement, no indication of any reaction to the outside world, no consciousness.

And when a patient emerges from a coma, sits up, blinks and yawns, this may still not be a sign of anything approaching a full recovery. In a persistent vegetative state, or PVS, a person may sleep and wake, apparently as normal, and show a full range of normal reflexes. They may even smile and grimace, yet show no signs of reacting to the outside world, or of any high-level mental processes going on at all.

As the state of coma demonstrates, the body may continue living, while the person normally inhabiting that

body has departed, but how can we tell whether that departure is temporary or permanent?

Geoffrey Lean, the environment correspondent of the *Independent on Sunday*, recalled recently his own time in a coma after an operation had gone wrong: "I spent much of the time either in total blackness or in a strange, white, hazy world, as if surrounded by rumpled sheets. I could not see my body, but I could feel myself being pulled around on the bed... I could also feel my wife, Judy's, hand in mine, our fingers entwined together. I could hear her telling me that I was being brave, that the children were all right, that their schools and my office were being supportive. I could not work out what she was doing in this strange new world, but her presence was reassuring."

There was no entry into Geoffrey's world for his family or medical staff. Nobody could know whether he felt

anything, recognised anybody, or knew anything of what was happening to him. Nobody knew if he was mentally dead or alive.

The concept of brain death - as verified by no reflexes, no breathing and a flat electroencephalogram - has recently been extended to the idea of brain-stem death - similar but with a possible reading on the EEG. Yet some of the recent remarkable cases of recovery have followed readings that would have justified, under the current rules, turning off all life-support systems.

The most celebrated recent case was that of Mark Newton, reported last month. His mother had given permission for his machine to be switched off and his organs donated before suddenly changing her mind, hurling herself across him and begging doctors to keep the life-support running. His first word on regaining consciousness was "Mum". Improve-

ments in the treatment of patients in coma, simply enabling them to stay alive, are resulting in more cases of spontaneous recovery, even after several years.

Anyone who has read the case studies of Oliver Sacks will realise, the brain has a remarkable ability, even when severely damaged, to find a mode of functioning and to reconstruct a personality that together make internal sense to its owner. Some of the recent accounts of patients who have come out of long-lasting comas provide a powerful confirmation of that facility. These people may have been apparently unhearing and unfeeling for years, yet when they emerge, we learn that they heard what was happening, they felt

Improvements in treatment are resulting in more spontaneous recovery

the injections, they knew when their loved ones were holding their hands and they understood what was being said to them.

These moving tales also underline how we can have little hope of coming to grips with the nature of unconsciousness until we understand the physical basis, within the brain, of consciousness itself. And that, despite the numerous theories of consciousness that have been advocated in recent years, still seems a very long way off indeed.

Last weekend, when Geoffrey Wildsmith tapped out that message to the police, two years after he had been found on a train in a pool of blood, with part of his skull and brain missing, it also confirmed another important lesson. Every coma patient is a different individual. There are, at our present state of knowledge, no general rules.

This all adds up to perhaps the most difficult moral dilemma facing the medical profession today. Every patient in a coma is different. Every one needs an individual decision.

The parents of the Hillsborough stadium disaster victim Tony Bland had to fight legal battles to let their son die after 47 months on a life-support system. Other court cases have been fought over relatives' desires to have a patient kept alive against the judgement of the medical profession. The cases of the past three weeks only serve to highlight the dilemma. They are life or death decisions at their most stark, and we do not know enough to be sure we are doing the right thing.

a politician enjoying the "freedom" of the closet at the expense of those lesbians and gay men who were "out".

Once we have achieved legal equality and social justice for lesbians and gay men, then questions of sexuality will start to become irrelevant. Every one of us can then get on with our lives and we will be able to rid ourselves of the diversion of sexual grouping.

However, for this to happen both Labour and the Conservatives will have to commit themselves to affording equal citizenship to everyone.

The writer is an actor and a former chair of the Stonewall Group, which campaigns for legal equality and social justice for lesbians and gay men.

Gordon's desert island nightmare

ANOTHER VIEW

Michael Cashman

as if Gordon's chosen book had been *Kama Sutra*. Coupled with preoccupation with Labour's economic plans, it was obvious that this presenter's mind was on the sensational headlines that would follow the discussion and any subsequent revelations. Brown dealt with her questioning admirably. The wider question still begs to be answered: when is it ever right to question a public figure about their sexuality? In Brown's case, the answer is quite simple. He has never made family values the centrepiece of his political platform. He is an elected politi-

cian concerned with the governance of this country: all we ask of him is a clear pair of hands and a good brain.

When a politician seeks to restrict the civil and human rights of a sexual minority, then their sexuality is directly relevant. If Gordon Brown had sought to discriminate against homosexuals in his economic policies,

then issues pertaining to his sexuality would be pertinent. Would we countenance, for example, a closeted Secretary of State for the Environment denying lesbians and gay men succession to tenancy rights? I don't think that we could. It would amount to advanced hypocrisy on the part of the politician. Equally, it would be hypocritical if restrictions on the rights of lesbians and gay men to serve in the military were imposed by a Secretary of State for Defence who was homosexual. In these theoretical circumstances, we would be witnessing

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obituaries / gazette

Marie-Hélène de Rothschild

Marie-Hélène de Rothschild was the wife of Baron Guy de Rothschild, head of the famous banking family. She was well known in France for her lavish hospitality and in particular for some magnificent balls she gave in the 1960s and 1970s at the Château de Ferrières. They were attended by the *grands* of European society and by such luminaries as Jane Birkin and Serge Gainsbourg, but she drew the line at Aristotle and Jackie Onassis.

Her greatest triumph was the Proust Ball in December 1971, in celebration of the centenary of the reclusive author's birth. Some 350 guests sat down to dinner, with 350 more for a late supper in the dining room, bedecked with palm trees and ferns and squares of foie gras. They ate consommé, quenelles of lobster, duck stuffed with foie gras and *foie de canard*, decked with pineapple, small mirabelles and a delicious prune jam. The feast ended with pistachio bombe glacée, and it was all served on pleated mauve table cloths, adorned with mauve or cloths. Torches lit the way to the chateau and chandeliers hung out of the windows.

The guests came in costume and were photographed by Cecil Beaton. Adorned as the photographer, Beaton set up a special studio for the occasion, taking portraits of Marisa Berenson as the Marchesa Casati, Audrey Hepburn, Princess Grace of Monaco and Elizabeth Taylor. The Duchess of Windsor, described by Beaton that night as "a mad Goya", was bedecked with a large blue feather. At dinner, as she turned her head, the feather dipped into the consommé or gravy and then brushed Baron Guy across the face.

In 1972 there was a Surrealist Ball at Ferrières. The pudding was a life-size model of a woman, naked but for a rose, lying

on a bed of roses, the whole thing made of sugar. The invitation was printed back to front, the reversed writing transposed on to a sky by Magritte.

Described as a legendary hostess whose name was the password among *le tout Paris*, the Baroness was also a considerable fund-raiser for medical research, and a patron of artists, musicians, movie stars and couturiers.

She could also take credit for the advancement of an employee of Rothschild Frères, contributing to his later success in politics. Baron Guy chose to keep his business and private entertaining strictly separate, his business friends being restricted to a shoot a year at Ferrières. One year one of the guests was the manager of Rothschild Frères, Georges Pompidou. In the words of Baron Guy, Marie-Hélène "immediately detected the amazing richness of the human being behind the man who arrived for his first weekend, a bit awkward, reserved to the point of shyness, moreover a businessman (a priori suspect), uncommunicative..." Marie-Hélène's mother described him as possessing "one eye a vicar, the other a rascal." Pompidou became a close friend of the Rothschilds. He had already worked for de Gaulle. The dual influence propelled him forward.

Later Baron Guy took credit for Pompidou's influence de Gaulle in France's entry to the Common Market. "Pompidou had become 'European' as a result of his experience in working at the rue Laffitte".

Marie-Hélène was the daughter of Baron Egmont van Zuylen, a rich diplomat from one of the oldest families in the Netherlands, in the service of the King of the Belgians. Her mother was Egyptian. Her father owned the magnificent Château de Haar in Holland.

Marie-Hélène was educated at Marymount College in New York, where she considerably developed the spontaneity she had inherited from her mother. Following graduation she came to Paris and married her first husband, Count François de Nicolay, a breeder of thoroughbreds in the Sarthe region. They had one son, Philippe, and shortly afterwards divorced.

Her second husband was Baron Guy de Rothschild, head of Rothschild Frères, the largest private bank in France, but later nationalised. They met at a gala in Deauville at which Edith Piaf provided the cabaret, and he presented the prize of two cases of Château-Lafite to the Nicolays. The Baron was much struck by the young countess. Eventually they were married in 1957.

For him too it was a second marriage. The union was controversial because the bride was Catholic and he was Jewish. She was obliged to obtain a papal dispensation to annul her previous marriage and marry outside the faith. He was forced to relinquish the presidency of the Jewish community in France. This was the first non-Jewish wedding for a head of the Rothschild clan, though, interestingly, Marie-Hélène's grandmother was the daughter of Salomon de Rothschild, Guy's great-uncle. Their son, Edouard, was raised as a Jew.

The Baron described his wife as having "a fabulous appetite for life, emotions always at their height, a spontaneity with a thousand facets, as ever-changing as the sea. And charm, which defies description." Rostropovich, the cellist, said that she had a heart "that was bigger than all Russia". Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor were great favourites in the late 1960s. His description of Marie-Hélène was sharper than most:



Marie-Hélène de Rothschild and her husband at Longchamp, 1958

"She is quite an ugly woman with a large hooked nose and an almost negroid mouth but very beautiful blind eyes, and the vicinity of her manner and her machine-gun delivery in both languages makes her very attractive."

She was indeed rather gaunt. The explanation was that she was a sufferer from arthritis as early as 1962. Her husband wrote: "It may seem incredible that her exuberance is all too often shattered by pain. Lately her illness confined her to her bed for some years."

The de Rothschilds were both keen race-goers and breeders (with 30 mares at stud). She had her own colours from 1953. Their horse Ebury won the Arc de Triomphe and the Coronation Cup. Shantung came 3rd in the 1959 Derby, and Baron Guy won the Eclipse Stakes with Tropic. His best horse, Vieux Manoir, won the Grand Prix de Paris. The Queen visited the Rothschild stud privately on her visit to Normandy in 1967.

They restored the family chateau, Ferrières, and reopened it in 1959. The property

dated back to 1855 and was designed by Joseph Paxton, the architect son of the Duke of Devonshire's famous gardener. It was hailed as "the finest example of Second Empire style". King William I of Prussia declared: "What an incredible palace! A king would not have dared to build it. It took a Rothschild! Almost all the Rothschilds lived in a manner dubbed the 'Rothschild style' - a mixture of Napoleon III's *objets d'art*, comfort and luxury, with precious miniature and rare books mixed in with family photos, plants and flowers. Eventually in 1975 the Rothschilds gave the chateau to the University of Paris, and settled in a smaller house on the estate (of which, after initial reluctance, Marie-Hélène eventually became fond).

They also lived in the historic Hôtel Lambert on the Ile-Saint-Louis in Paris, where their friend Alexis de Redé had a splendid apartment. When the Hôtel was for sale in 1975 Marie-Hélène persuaded Baron Guy to buy it: "Do you feel young? ... Young enough to change the course of your life in the space of two hours?" They restored the palace to its 17th-century glories.

In 1981 President Mitterrand nationalised all the French banks and for a time Baron Guy went to live in America, but Marie-Hélène remained at the Hôtel Lambert.

A life such as hers could scarcely be relived in the 1990s. In Marie-Hélène the Rothschild fortune was more than matched by imagination, inspiration, supreme good taste and generosity. She was like a child in a dream-world and opened its possibilities to many who will never forget it. Baron Guy recognised this in the dedication of his memoirs: "To Marie-Hélène, without whom things would only be just what they are."

Hugo Viekers
Marie-Hélène van Zuylen de Nuyvel, patron of the arts and racehorse owner; born New York City 23 August 1931; married first Count François de Nicolay (one son, marriage dissolved), 1957 Baron Guy de Rothschild (one son); died Ferrières, Seine et Marne, France 1 March 1996.

Lydia Chukovskaya

The writer Lydia Chukovskaya stood firm in the face of totalitarianism. In the 1960s she raised her voice in defence of the young but already well-known poet Joseph Brodsky and she protested against the trial of two fellow writers, Andrei Siniavsky and Yuli Daniel. In the 1970s she stood up for the writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn and the nuclear physicist Andrei Sakharov, who were being harassed by the KGB. The Soviet government regarded her as a thorn in its side.

She was born in 1907 in Helsinki in the Grand Duchy of Finland, part of the Russian Empire. Her father, Kornei Chukovsky, was a writer much loved for his children's stories. Chukovskaya's first job was as an editor at a children's publishing house in Leningrad. She published her first short story, "Leningrad-Odessa", under a pen-name, A. Uglov. At about this time she met and married a young Jewish physicist, Mikhail Bronstein. In 1937 he was arrested on a fabricated charge and disappeared to the gulag where he was executed.

By the time of Stalin's death in March 1953 Chukovskaya had become an established literary figure, one of the senior editors on a liberal monthly, *Literaturnaya Moskva*. Her real breakthrough had been a short story, "Sofia Petrovna", which she wrote during 1939-40, circulated in typescript form in literary circles in the late 1950s. It appeared in Paris in 1965 under the title "Opusculum Dom" ("An Abandoned House"). She was banned in the Soviet Union.

Her second important book, *Spusk pod Vodu* ("Descent into Water"), again never appeared in her own country. It was published in Paris in 1972. Written in the form of a diary, it describes the impossible situation of the poetess Anna Akhmatova and the satirical writer, Mikhail Zoshchenko, who in 1949 were ferociously attacked and then thrown out of the Writers' Union. In those days that meant they were banned from being published.

In 1964 Chukovskaya energetically protested against the trial of the 24-year-old Jewish poet Joseph Brodsky, who was nevertheless sent into exile. She also wrote a series of letters in support of Alexander Solzhenitsyn, the 1970 winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature; but these appeared only in the West, in the 1970 Munich *Literatur und Repression*. In 1974, together with the physicist Andrei Sakharov, she protested against Solzhenitsyn's deportation. Shortly afterwards she defended Sakharov against the KGB's harassment.

Lydia Chukovskaya's activities were regarded as dangerous and she was closely watched by the KGB. Only her established literary name and the fact that she was well known in the West, added to her father's stature as a children's writer, protected her from arrest.

Her most important work was her two volumes of conversations with and diaries about Anna Akhmatova. Entitled *Zapiski Akhmatovoi* ("Akhmatova's Notes"), the first volume appeared in 1976 and the second in 1980, both in Paris. The books were banned in the Soviet Union.

In 1978, again in Paris, Chukovskaya published several volumes of poems, written between 1936 and 1976, under the title *Po Eto Storonu Smerti* ("On This Side of Death"). These were in part her autobiography, containing strong personal overtones: about the loss of young love, her husband, and the suffering of her people.

From the 1960s onwards she lived between a Moscow flat and her father's dacha in Perelekino, a village about 20km from Moscow and home to a colony of writers including Boris Pasternak. It was there that she died.

Jeanne Vronskaya
Lydia Chukovskaya, writer, poet, editor; born Helsinki, Russia 24 March 1907; married Mikhail Bronstein, 1934 (died 1937); died Perelekino, Russia 8 February 1996.

Alan Brown

It is difficult to imagine any football manager being harder on his players than Alan Brown. No club in his charge ever lifted a major trophy, yet he remained a hugely respected, if somewhat idiosyncratic member of his profession, his name a byword for truth, frankness and rigid discipline.

Yet while the "Iron Man" image will be forever synonymous with this complex Northumbrian, his contribution as one of soccer's most thoughtful and innovative tacticians should never be overlooked. Neither should his sheer passion for the game; he once described football, with no hyperbole intended, as "one of the biggest things that happened in Creation".

The son of a painter and decorator, Brown went to grammar school and had a yen to be a teacher, but as one of a large family during the Depression, did not have the opportunity for further education. However, he was blessed with natural athleticism and, after revealing immense ability as an unyielding centre-half in local football, he joined Huddersfield Town in 1933. He did not settle contentedly with the Terriers and left to spend two years as a policeman before returning to make a few dozen senior appearances for the club before the Second World War.

However, it was after the war, having been transferred to Burnley, that Brown made his most significant impact as a player. In 1946-47, he skippered the Lancastrians to promotion from the Second Division and led them to the FA Cup Final, in which they were defeated 1-0 by Charlton Athletic. In 1948, a £15,000 deal took him to Notts County, but the 34-year-old played only a



"Iron Man": Brown coaching young football players as Manager of Sunderland AFC, 1958

handful of games before ending his playing days. Thereafter, Brown opened a restaurant in Burnley, but returned to the game he loved on the suggestion of Stanley Rous, then Secretary of the Football Association. In 1954, after three and a half seasons as a coach with Sheffield Wednesday, Brown moved into management with his former employers, Burnley, upsetting several senior players who were not keen on the prospect of being bossed by such a tower of moral rectitude. Unsurprisingly, Brown was unruffled by this undercurrent, and set about his new task with evangelistic zeal. To him, such virtues as integrity and industry were compulsory

and he saw to it that his club espoused them, too. Indeed, when work started on a new outdoor training centre, he helped to dig the foundations himself and "volunteered" his players to do likewise. A few bands were blistered, and probably a few egos as well.

However, Brown was never solely a disciplinarian. His deep fascination with strategy was evident in the mesmerising range of free-kick routines he instituted, and in his enterprising use of short corners, both of which were much copied elsewhere. Also, as the Turf Moor club was not blessed with bottomless coffers, he was committed to the introduction and development of youngsters, a policy which he

was to pursue vigorously elsewhere in later years and which did much to pave the way for future Burnley triumphs.

Brown was not to be part of those, though, after keeping the Clarets in the top half of the First Division for three seasons, he left for Sunderland, who had been suffering scandals over illegal payments to players and who were languishing near the foot of the table. He was scathingly contemptuous of such abuse and, despite the Wearside being relegated for the first time in their history in 1958, Brown both ensured that their act was well and truly cleaned up and gradually realised their playing fortunes. He spent far more time in a

track suit than a lounge suit and, after several near misses, led them to promotion in 1964. Then, to the consternation of many fans, he left to take over at Sheffield Wednesday, an ambitious club with what was then the most sumptuously-appointed stadium in the land.

Brown took the Owls to the 1966 FA Cup Final, which they lost after leading Everton by two goals, but League form tended to be mediocre or worse and in February 1968, he returned to Sunderland. Another relegation in 1970 was followed by two failures to win promotion and the sack in November 1972. After that, Brown coached in Norway, a prelude to a retirement blighted by ill health.

He will be remembered as a man who believed that rules, both for football and life, were sacrosanct. For example, he always refused to sanction material inducements to parents of promising youngsters, at a time when that practice was widespread, even if it meant losing a possible future star. His contempt for the moral bankruptcy that spawned the recent "bung" scandals must have been total. His career never attained the dizzy heights, but his personal standards did. Emphatically, Alan Brown was not for turning.

Ivan Pounting
Alan Winston Brown, football player and manager; born Corbridge, Northumberland 26 August 1914; player for Huddersfield Town 1933-46, Burnley 1946-48, Notts County 1948; Coach, Sheffield Wednesday 1951-54; Manager, Burnley 1954-57, Sunderland 1957-64, 1968-72, Sheffield Wednesday 1964-68; died Barnstaple, Devon 8 March 1996.

Henry Guinness had a pioneer spirit that motivated the whole of his life as a missionary. He was one of 200 new missionaries sent to China in 1931 by the China Inland Mission, and drew crowds to his preaching by playing a cornet in the villages. The instrument went with him to a Chinese Church conference in England in 1933.

He had been born in Kaifeng, in central China, where his parents had moved just after the notorious Boxer Rebellion in which 75 missionaries and countless Chinese Christians were slaughtered. The Guinness family is noted for achievement, chiefly in the fields of banking, brewing and missionary work. Henry Guinness came from the Grattan line of the family, who tended towards mission work, and his father had moved to China in 1900 for this purpose. His mother came from a noble Swedish family, ill-health separated him from them early. Dust and dirt and Yellow River floods combined to make life in Kaifeng "fusty, brutish and short". The death of his father when he was 17 made him look at the purpose of life, and led to his resolve to become a missionary.

Back in Kaifeng for the China Inland Mission (known today as OMF International), his work among boys received impetus from his fascination with anything that worked, from pinhole cameras to aeroplane propellers. But a cholera epidemic, an earthquake, and repeated crop failures also called for an empathy with a tortured community, whose lives were made worse by the Japanese invasion of 1933.

Conscious of his need for a co-worker, Guinness prayed for one to be sent. That night

a burglar broke into the house. Guinness confronted him in his pyjamas, sat him down, and taught him from the Gospel of St John. The man professed to become a Christian, and in the morning Guinness went out, left the man to get the hunch, and trusted him with the house. This man became the co-worker.

In 1938 Guinness married Mary Taylor, a doctor, and the young couple had to cope with famine, drought, locusts, raging inflation and war. When parents abandoned their children for lack of food, the Guinnesses rescued those they could. Two of their own three sons died in Honan Province, and the couple had to flee from war the day after the second son died.

The years from 1945 to 1947 were spent in Dublin, where Guinness represented the China Inland Mission in Ireland. In 1947, the Guinnesses returned to China, playing a key role in work among students. Thousands of students were converging in Nanjing at the time, following the 1947 Interservice Conference, and the Guinnesses ran Bible study classes until indoctrination began. After



Guinness: love of adventure

ter a short three years, Communism came and missionaries had to leave. The Guinnesses moved to Scotland, where many students and prospective missionaries tasted their hospitality, until they were able to return to East Asia, to serve in Malaysia and then in Taiwan.

In the early Seventies, I had the privilege of travelling around Taiwan with Henry Guinness, who was directing the work of the OMF there. Then in his sixties, he had lost none of his get up and go. "Getting up" might be four in the morning and "going" might be travelling all day, perhaps snacking on lychees bought through the bus window as we went.

On one occasion in China, he arrived at an inn late at night. Preparing to sleep, he heard bandits in the next room discussing how to dispose of his body, and how much they could get for his boots. Opening the door of his room and moving slowly towards the toilet, Guinness scanned the high wall for a foothold, sprang up and leapt over into the fields. Despite a chase by the bandits, he made it to another village four miles away.

Henry Guinness's bravery and love of adventure was balanced by a deep faith, and a caring heart that continued until his last days. His wife died in 1993 and he is survived by his son, Oswald, a well-known author and Christian apologist, who lives in the United States.

Dennis Lane
Henry Whitfield Guinness, missionary; born Kaifeng, Honan Province, China 18 April 1908; married 1938 Dr Mary Taylor (died 1993); one son, and two sons deceased; died Farnbury, Kent 17 February 1996.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

DEATHS

MANSFIELD: Peter John, peacefully at Warwick Hospital, on Saturday 9 March. Noted Arabist and writer. He died surrounded by his family and friends and in the arms of his partner of 35 years Lutz Canforas. Small family, service on Friday (funeral service to follow in London. Donations, if desired, to Medical Aid for Palestinians, 33a Hington Park Street, London N1).

MEMORIAL SERVICES

MURRAY: George Iain, 10th Duke of Atholl. A memorial service for the late Duke of Atholl will be held on Friday 12 April 1996, at 3pm, at Dunkeld Cathedral.

IN MEMORIAM

BARRE: Frederick, died on Thursday 12 March 1992, much loved.

For BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS, telephone 0171-293 2011.

Birthdays

Sir Antony Acland, Provost of Eton, former diplomat, 66; Dr Giovanni Agnelli, chairman, Fiat SpA, 75; Mr Rudolph Agnew, former group chief executive, Consolidated Gold Fields, 62; Mr Edward Albee, playwright, 62; Mr Ronald Alby, artist and former Keeper of Modern Art, Tate Gallery, 70; Mrs Virginia Bottomley MP, Secretary of State for National Heritage, 48; Mr Norbert Brinlin, violinist, 78; Sir Geoffrey de Bellaguet, Director of the Royal Collection, 65; Mr Willie Duran, rugby footballer, 66; Mr John Grew, writer and editor, 91; Mr Norman Hogg MP, 58; Mr Philip Jones, former principal, Trinity College of Music, London, 68; Mr Anthony Loeblis, a former vice-chairman, S.G. Warburg & Co, 64; Mr David Mellor QC MP, 47; Miss Liz Minnell, actress and singer, 50; Mr David Milnick, interior decorator, 57; Mr Roland Moyle, barrister and former government minister, 68; Sir Tom Norbington, former MP, 79; Mr Patrick Proctor, painter, 60; Mr Rod Richards MP, 49; Mr Ralph Richards, composer and conductor, 75; Viscount Trenchard, director, Kleinwort Benson, 45; Miss Gudrun Urs, actress, 78; Miss Elizabeth Vaughan.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: André de Lencrue, landscape architect, 1013; Thomas Augustine Arne, composer of *Ruile Britannia*, 1719; Kemal Atatürk (Mustapha Kemal), soldier and statesman, 1881; Vaslav Fomich Nijinsky, dancer, 1890; Jack (Jean-Louis) Kerouac, novelist, 1922; Death: Cesare Borgia, cardinal, soldier and politician, killed, 1507; Frans van Mieris the Elder, painter, 1681; George Westinghouse, inventor, 1914; Anne Frank, diarist, at Bergen-Belsen 1945. On this day the Bermudas became an English colony, 1609; the United States Post Office was established, 1789; the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, London, (third theatre) opened, 1794; the first main line electric train in Britain ran from Liverpool to Southport, 1904; the Girl Guides (later Scouts) movement was started in the United States by Juliette Gordon Low, 1912. Today is the Feast Day of St Alphege of Winchester. St Bernard of Cugna, St Maximilian of Thebes, St Paul Aurelian or of Leon, Saints Peter, Gorgonius and Dorotheus, St Seraphina or St Theophanes the Chiroclerici.

Lectures

National Gallery: Linda Bolton, "Constable (ii): the changing face of nature", 1pm.
Victoria and Albert Museum: Geoffrey Opie, "The History of the V&A: later developments", 2.30pm.
Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution, London N6: Dr John Villiers, "Court, Temple and Kampung: the art and culture of Indonesia", 7.45pm.
Leicester University: Professor Peter Fearon, "The Political Economy of the New Deal", 5.15pm.
University College London, London WC1: Professor Michele Hanroosh, "In Search of the 19th Century: Delacroix's Journal", 5.30pm.
Tate Gallery: Judy Crosby, "Constable's English Landscape Mezzotints", 1pm.
London School of Economics (Malagowski Memorial Lecture), London

Winchester. St Bernard of Cugna, St Maximilian of Thebes, St Paul Aurelian or of Leon, Saints Peter, Gorgonius and Dorotheus, St Seraphina or St Theophanes the Chiroclerici.

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WC2: Dr Christina Toren, "Compassion for the Other: Bishop as constituted internationally in Fiji", 5.30pm.
RIBA Architecture Centre, London W1: Richard Gray, "Cineamas in Britain", 6.30pm.
National Portrait Gallery: Simone Mathews, "Style and Technique in British Portraiture 1650-1700", 1pm.

Luncheons

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Sir Nicholas Boscor MP, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, hosted a lunch held yesterday at Lancaster House, London SW1, in honour of Señor Hernan Errazuriz, the Ambassador of the Republic of Chile.
Rotary Club of London
Mr Nick Tarah, Past President, Rotary Club of London, presided at a luncheon held yesterday at the Portman Hotel, London W1. Mr Neville Shulman was the speaker.

Dinners

Armed Forces Parliamentary Scheme
Miss Betty Boothroyd MP was the host at the Annual Dinner of the

Armed Forces Parliamentary Scheme held yesterday evening in Speakers' House, London SW1. Mr Nicholas Soames MP, Minister of State for the Armed Forces, Dr David Clark MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Defence, and Sir Neil Thorne, Chairman, were the speakers.

Commonwealth Day Observance

The Queen and the Prince of Wales attended the multi-faith Commonwealth Day Observance held yesterday at Westminster Abbey, London SW1. The Commonwealth Secretary-General, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, read the Commonwealth Day Message from the Queen on the theme "Working in Partnership". The Prime Minister was represented by Baroness Chalker of Wallasey and the Foreign Secretary by Mr Jeremy Hanley MP. The Leader of the Opposition was represented by Mr Robin Cook MP. The Leader of the Liberal Democrats was represented by Mr Menzies Campbell QC MP. A procession of flags of the Commonwealth was borne by nationals of member countries.

Music was provided by the Melodius Steel Orchestra UK, and singing by the choirs of Westminster Abbey and the London Adventist Chorale. An obse solo was performed by Mr Daniel Bates.

Among other presenters were:

Mr Erika Anyaoku; Mrs Jeremy Hanley; The Lord Mayor of Westminster, Mr Alan Brodie; The Lord Mayor of London, Mr John Chatterley; and the Lady Margaret, Mrs Chatterley; Sir John Coker, Permanent Under-Secretary of State and Head of the Diplomatic Corps; Vice-Admiral Sir James Weatherall, Master of the Diplomatic Corps; The Hon Caryl Chessell, Speaker of the Zimbabwe House of Assembly; Mr K. Srinivasan, Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General (India); and Mrs Srinivasan; Mr Erika Anyaoku, Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General (Development Cooperation); Sir Peter Marshall, Chairman of the Joint Commonwealth Societies' Council; and Lady Marshall; Sir Oliver Forster, Chairman of the Commonwealth Trust and the Royal Commonwealth Society; Mr S.W. Lilley, Representative of the Chairman of the Royal Overseas League; and Mrs Lilley, Baroness Brigstocke, Chairman of the English-Speaking Union; Mr Colin Webster, Chairman of the Victorian League for Commonwealth Friendship; and Mrs Webster.
Rabbi Hugo Gryn; Shmuel Daymont; The Rev Geoffrey Roper; Rabbi David J. Gold; Rabbi (representing the Chief Rabbi); Mr Inge Slight; The Rev John H. McIndoe (representing the Rev Alexander Calcutt); Professor Dr M.A. Al-Mansoori; The Most Ven. Pandit M. Vajragyan; Canon Vivian Berry (representing the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster).

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS
The Queen holds an investiture at Buckingham Palace. The Prince of Wales, Prince Charles, and the Duke of York, Prince Andrew, attend a Gala Concert at the Royal Albert Hall, London SW1. The Princess Royal, Patron, the Bank of England, attends the conference "Raising Standards of Basic Skills: the role of literacy" at the Royal Albert Hall, London SW1. The Duchess of Gloucester opens the rehabilitation unit at Broadgreen Hospital, visits the North West Cancer Research Fund, Liverpool, and opens the new extension at Belvedere School for Girls, Prince Park, Liverpool. The Duke of Kent visits the Royal School for Deaf Children, Margate, at the opening of the new extension. The Duke of Kent visits the Royal School for Deaf Children, Margate, at the opening of the new extension. The Duke of Kent visits the Royal School for Deaf Children, Margate, at the opening of the new extension.

Changing of the Guard

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am. 7 Company "Coldstream Guards" mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11.30am. Band provided by the Grenadier Guards.

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No crash but equities are in for a rough ride



COMMENT

For a moment, it looked as if fear was getting the upper hand. A mere statistic was enough to lead to a dramatic change in perceptions about which way interest rates in the US are heading.

The world changes and markets change alongside it but the forces that guide and mould them do not. Economic fundamentals are only part of the story here. They both affect markets and are affected by them. But primarily it is the psychological factors of fear and greed that drive stock markets. They always have done, and always will do. The secret of stock market prediction, therefore, is correctly to read when the one is going to take over from the other.

For a moment there, it looked as if fear was getting the upper hand. A mere statistic – the US equivalent of our own unemployment figures – was enough to lead to a dramatic change in perceptions about which way interest rates in the US are heading. More cuts had been confidently expected, further fuelling this extraordinary bull run in equities. Now, with the US economy apparently heading for overkill, the expectation has swung 180 degrees: the next move will be up, not down, everyone is saying. Disaster – well, on Friday at least. With a weekend to sleep on it, the pundits are now not so sure. Wall Street was like a yo-yo yesterday, not knowing which way to go, and the situation looks harder to read than ever.

For what it is worth, here is the bear case for London equities. Let us assume that US interest rates are at the very least now on hold with the likelihood being that their next move is upwards. Despite the pause for breath yesterday, that cannot be anything other than bad news for US Treasury bonds. If they go

lower, gilts will go lower too, for bond markets are global nowadays and tend to move in tandem so that national differentials are maintained. Given that London equities are already expensive relative to gilts, any adverse reaction in gilts is going to cause shares to tumble.

Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, wants to see at least another half-point fall in British base rates. He believes that this is not only possible but also justified by the data. In the past he has been lucky and things have swung his way. Increasingly isolated in the Cabinet over Europe, his luck may now be running out. It is going to require an extraordinary and wholly unforeseen change in international and domestic economic conditions for him to justify that extra half point. Enfeebled though the Bank of England might be, the Chancellor is not going to be allowed to get away with it.

The other factor that has been holding up the London equity market, takeover fever, is also fading fast. There are still plenty of deals in the offing, but there is also a great deal of hesitation. Unsuspected markets – worse, markets that could fall heavily – are a bad backdrop for deal-making. Political uncertainty is adding to the "wait and see" mentality. Who knows when the general election might be, but the odds are fast shortening on the autumn and if that is the case, there are not going to be any big takeovers after May.

All things considered, then, things do not

look good for London equities, not good at all. Wall Street's mini-correction should not be written off lightly. It seems unlikely that we are heading for a crash similar to the one that afflicted world markets in 1987, but this year's bull market certainly looks to be over.

All the high street in a hypermarket

Petrol, Post Offices and now Sketchley dry cleaners. The big supermarket chains, in their search for new lines and sources of profit, continue their assault on the traditional preserve of the high street.

As it retrenches, with the closure of 160 branches, Sketchley is expanding out of town by opening an unspecified number of branches in Sainsbury supermarkets. Presumably it is only a matter of time before betting shops, travel agents, estate agents, and building societies are all there too, available at your local hypermarket. Why, it cannot be long before we are all nipping down to Sainsbury's for a pint as well.

The decline of the high street and the ever onwards and upwards march of the big supermarket chains is a long established trend, but we are surely witnessing something new here. In part, it is the decline of the high street brand name. Sketchley still has an upmarket ring to it, but on the whole it is perceived as just another bog-standard dry cleaner, to all intents and purposes indistin-

guishable from the one next door. But it is more than that. In an increasingly competitive world, it is also about the need to share costs and overheads. Furthermore, purveyors of specialist services need to go where the customers are. These days it tends to be the supermarket, not the high street.

Small businesses are a big election issue

Michael Heseltine, champion of small firms in his competitiveness drives when at the Department of Trade and Industry and now the Cabinet Office, was a distinguished absentee from yesterday's small business conference in London to launch a package of new policies for the supposed benefit of the entrepreneur. This perhaps was not too much of a surprise, since he would have risked a barrage of questions from the floor about his own admission that he had been a bad payer in his early business career.

But leaving aside Mr Heseltine's embarrassment at losing the initiative on an issue dear to his heart – the competitiveness of small firms – the real significance of yesterday's package was not the individual measures. It was the fact that the Prime Minister has taken over presentation of the policy.

According to a DTI minister, Mr Major's interest had an immediate impact inside Whitehall, where log-jams started breaking. The most obvious example was his insistence

that another look should be taken at enforcing disclosure by large companies of their late payments record. Only a few months ago, employers had successfully shot down this proposal and persuaded the Government to accept the second-best option of publication of companies' payment policies.

The statutory instrument enforcing disclosure of corporate policy went through the Commons only in January, but already it is looking out of date. Policy is one thing, practice often quite another. The policy statement compromise always did look unsatisfactory. Most of the new measures for small firms, including those on late payment, are far from final decisions and must go out to consultation to see if they will work. But whereas in the past this formula has more often than not been a prelude to shelving anything remotely controversial or difficult, the Prime Minister's involvement tells a different story.

Small business is becoming an election issue, because of its impact on growth and the large number of jobs it creates. Next week, Tony Blair is to introduce a Labour conference on small business at which many of the personalities at Mr Major's jamboree will resurface, along with their shopping lists for government action.

Anybody with a decent idea for improving the lot of small business will be pushing at an open door over the next few months, as the two parties try to outdo each other. In the policy field, small businesses have never had it so good.

Colorvision dives after OFT's move on licences

NIGEL COPE

Shares in Colorvision slumped 12 per cent yesterday when the Liverpool-based television and video retailer issued a profits warning following the decision by the Office of Fair Trading to revoke its consumer licences in January.

The company complained bitterly about its treatment by the OFT and said the issue now threatened its survival. The board has appointed advisers to identify companies who might buy a stake in the group.

As the shares fell 3p to 23p compared with their 250p peak in 1988, chairman Neville Michaelson said: "It is a tragedy that this case has been allowed to go so far without any debate as to the consequences and how it could be resolved. The directors will continue to fight to preserve this 32-year-old business on behalf of its 750 employees, our shareholders and the 200 sub-contractors and small businesses who are dependent on us."

The company has appointed Anthony Scrivener QC to act on its behalf on its appeal against the OFT decision.

Mr Scrivener said: "In my opinion it is clear that the OFT has misdirected themselves in law and in fact on many important issues. I have no hesitation in advising the company to appeal."

In its trading statement yesterday the company said it now expects losses for the year to March 31 to be greater than current expectations among analysts of a £750,000 deficit. The company said it was unlikely that there would be any major improvement in trading until the issue on credit licences had been resolved. Sales excluding satellite systems have been 29 per cent down on the comparable period last year. The OFT stripped Colorvision of its consumer credit li-

centages after concluding that the company had used misleading price information, not offered refunds where appropriate and entered false information on credit arrangements.

Colorvision is appealing against the decision and has said its infringements have not been unduly serious or unique in the industry. That process could normally take up to a year, however the OFT has now agreed to meet with the company to discuss the issue. No date has been fixed as the senior OFT official who will be chairing the meeting is on leave.

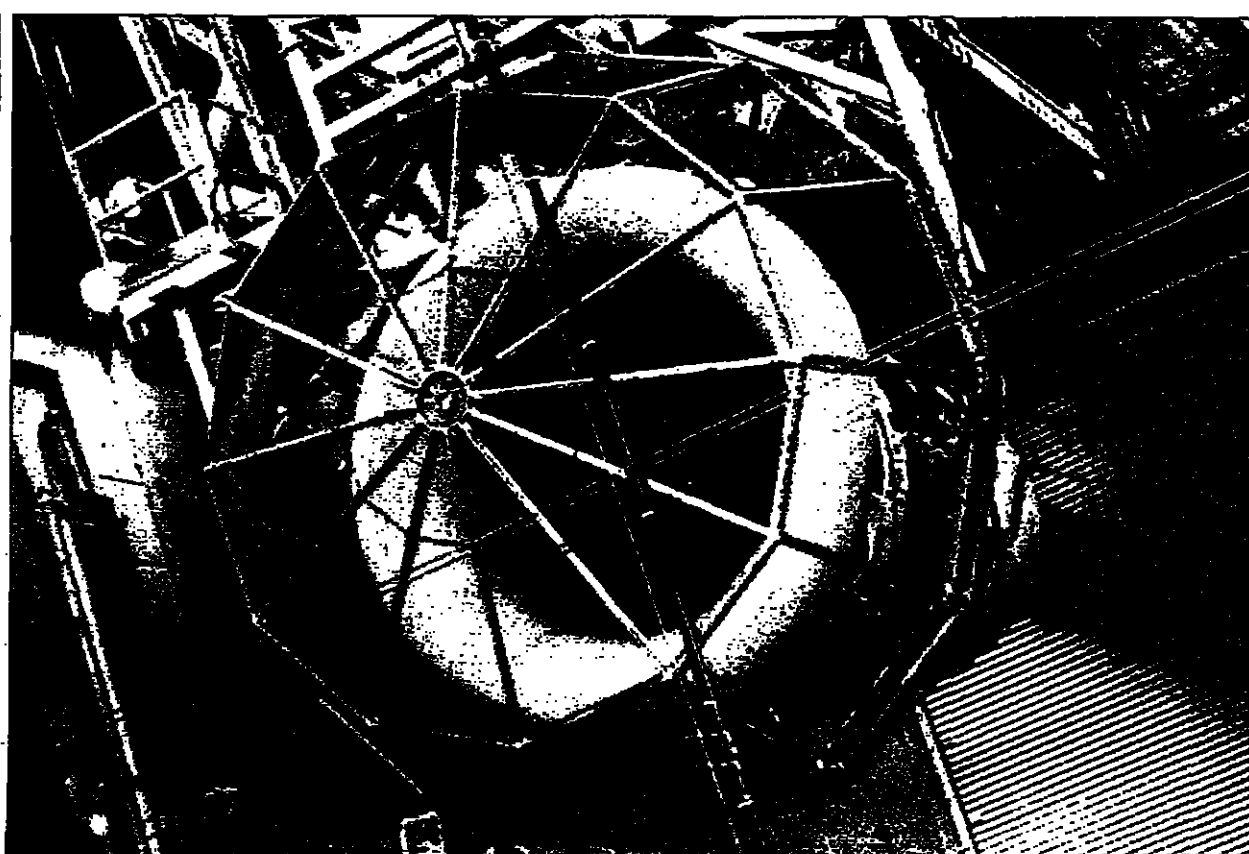
Colorvision gave immediate notice of appeal to the DTI and pending the outcome of the appeal, the company's credit licences remain in place. However, the company said the OFT statement contained "emotive statements" which had achieved widespread publicity.

Speaking on the company's Mr Scrivener QC said that the group's credit licences were renewed by the OFT in September 1993 and that much of the evidence that gave rise to the decision, predated that renewal.

Colorvision says it has developed new procedures and training methods to deal with any problems.

Colorvision was once a stock market darling in the late 1980s. But since then the recession and the cut throat conditions in the electrical retailing market have taken their toll.

The company said in January that it said it felt it had been singled out by the OFT and said that the company would not have survived for 32 years if had not treated its customers correctly. But the bad publicity seems to have cast a pall over the group and its market capitalisation has now slumped from its £50m peak in 1988 to just £4.5m yesterday.



Warning up: Success in the bid for the JAST engine would bring a stream of work to Rolls-Royce's factories

Rolls and GE fighter forces join

RUSSELL HOTTEN

Rolls-Royce is joining forces with its arch-rival, General Electric of America, to produce an advanced engine for a new generation fighter aircraft.

The deal, announced yesterday and which also brings Rolls's American division, Allison Engine, into the partnership, creates a formidable force to challenge Pratt and Whitney's rival military engine.

Rolls, GE and Allison intend to form a more integrated business consortium with the next few years, the companies said. A new engine is needed for the Joint Advanced Strike Technology aircraft, expected to be the only new US fighter programme in the next 30 years.

Three US aircraft-makers –

Boeing, Lockheed and McDonnell Douglas – are working on designs of the new fighters, which are also expected to replace the Royal Navy's Harrier jump jets.

Rolls estimates that US/UK orders could total 3,000 early next century, with "considerable additional export potential." Under the agreement, GE would act as lead systems integrator for engine development work, and Rolls would work on the design and development of the fan.

"By drawing on the strengths of the three companies, this team can produce the range of technologies to meet the challenging JAST requirements," said Charles Hughes, Rolls's project director for future combat engines.

The engine-makers hope that their YF120 cruise engine can gain the lead over the F119 engine being developed by Pratt and Whitney, which is leading the competition for the order in the early stages.

The Rolls partnership is also working on developing a GEA-FXL lift engine that would initially get the fighters into the air.

GE and Allison, bought by Rolls last year, have co-operated on developing advanced propulsion technologies for the US government since 1993.

The failure to reach a deal could have serious consequences for MTU, which has been restructuring as part of Dasa's Dolores ("dollar-low rescue") program.

The companies had hoped to formulate an alliance by the end of February, but the date has come and gone.

"We must draw our conclusions from that," a BMW spokesman said. According to Reuters, industry sources said MTU's existing co-operation commitments with Pratt & Whitney make it impossible for it to team up with BMW/Rolls.

Dasa declined to comment on a report in Germany's *Hamburger* newspaper that the co-operation talks had collapsed.

Berensen affirms intention to keep holding in Rentokil

RUSSELL HOTTEN

Rentokil's majority shareholder, Sophus Berensen, yesterday moved to kill speculation about its long-term commitment to the company should Rentokil's £1.9bn takeover of BET succeed.

The Danish company, whose 51.7 per cent stake in Rentokil would be diluted to about 33 per cent after a takeover, said it would not sell its holding for at least five years.

Berensen's commitment to Rentokil was called into question over the weekend after damaging reports that the Danish company's chief executive, Hans Werdelin, wanted to re-

duce the stake to 25 per cent. Sophus had previously undertaken to remain "a long-term shareholder" and had said it would keep its shares for at least one year.

But in a statement to the Copenhagen stock exchange yesterday, Mr Werdelin said: "In view of continued speculation as to Sophus Berensen's long-term commitment to its Rentokil shareholding, the board confirms its previous statement that it intends to remain as a long-term shareholder in Rentokil. In particular Sophus is happy to undertake that it will not sell Rentokil shares for at least five years."

BET has sought to exploit a

potential rift between the rival business services company and Berensen as part of its first defence document, posted to shareholders on Sunday night. BET forecast a dividend of 5.1p for the year to 30 March, a 27.5 per cent rise over the previous year, and said a profits forecast would be made "in due course". BET repeated that there was only a 25 per cent overlap between the two businesses. "There appears to be no strategic rationale for combining the business," the company said.

BET shares were down 1.5p to 19.5p, while Rentokil slipped 5p to 34.5p on a difficult day for the whole stock market.

IN BRIEF

Oil reserves run deep

Britain will produce more oil than present consumption rates for another 10 years and there are reserves large enough to sustain significant production for at least a further 20 years, the UK Offshore Operators Association said yesterday. Gas production could also reach a new peak in 2,000, which will be double the level of 1990. The association described its new report as presenting a "very encouraging picture of offshore oil and gas and its potential longevity."

Cruickshank hits back at BT

Don Cruickshank, the telecoms regulator, published a formal response to complaints about the impact of new regulation on the company's shareholders. He said it was not part of his objective to penalise BT shareholders but "this does not mean that BT should be able to earn monopoly profits for its shareholders by exploiting its very strong market position." He was responding to criticisms by Sir Peter Bonfield, the chief executive of BT.

German production strengthens

Germany's industrial production was much stronger than expected in January, rising 1.6 per cent during the month. The year-on-year rate of growth recovered to 1.3 per cent after being negative for the previous five months. The main factor was a 10.2 per cent increase in capital goods output, while durable goods output was also up. Production of other consumer goods and construction both declined. With unemployment up again in February, analysts said yesterday's output figure had not damaged the chance of an interest rate cut in Germany.

Tourists stay home

There was a slowdown in international tourism in the world's rich countries last year, according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Slower growth meant arrivals at frontiers were up 4 per cent, the same as in 1994. But the number of nights' accommodation was up 3 per cent, down from the previous year's 11 per cent growth. Real revenues from tourism grew 2 per cent, half the previous year's rate. The 26 OECD countries account for about 70 per cent of the world's tourism.

Firm demand for Hutchison

Hutchison Whampoa, the owner of Orange, the mobile telephone company, said about 100,000 investors had registered to receive share applications from the company. Marketing to retail investors will begin tomorrow. A minimum investment of £1,000 is required from retail investors, who are being allocated half of the 325 million shares on offer, with the final price to be determined on 26 March.

Daly to retire at Rank

James Daly, managing director of the film and television division at Rank Organisation, will retire on 10 April following a recent illness. Mr Daly leaves after 34 years service with Rank, the last 14 as a main board director. Philip Clement, president of Rank's world-wide film and video processing businesses, will be replacing him.

Bank of Ireland Base Rate

Bank of Ireland announces that with effect from close of business open 11th March 1996 its Base Rate has decreased from 6.25% to 6%



Bank of Ireland

Head Office, 34 High Street, Slough, Berkshire SL1 1ED



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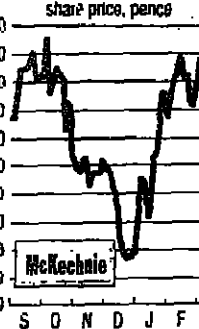
LOTHIAN

market report/shares

DATA BANK

FT-SE 100
3,674.5 -35.8
FT-SE 250
4,212.0 -40.7
FT-SE 350
1,843.0 -17.9
SEAQ VOLUME
631m shares,
40,578 bargains
Gilt Index
92.19 -0.45

SHARE SPOTLIGHT



Takeover talk proves good for Cable and Wireless

As the stock market wilted, shares of Cable and Wireless signalled takeover action. In heavy trading they jumped 30p to 477p after touching 482p.

Expectations of a US strike provoked the surge. The giant AT&T is regarded as the most likely predator.

The Cable excitement followed renewed speculation BT was about to mount a bid. It is known BT had sought, and apparently failed, to win Whitehall clearance for a strike. But discussions between the two continued. Cable admitted it had been involved in talks which had terminated.

The market seized upon the Cable statement as an admission it was ready to do a deal. With its boardroom weakened by the abrupt departure of Lord Young, chairman, and James Ross, chief executive, the telecommunications giant

is seen as vulnerable to a determined strike.

Its current capitalisation is around £10.5bn. But it has been clear for a long time that the group is undervalued on a sum-of-the-parts calculation. Its controlling stake in Hong Kong Telecom creates much of the confusion. Some believe to accommodate HKT's true valuation Cable could command a price tag of more than £20bn.

AT&T could, perhaps, match such a demanding valuation. But it could stretch BT, with a market worth of £22.8bn.

However an AT&T bid could force BT's hand. It is already under intense pressure from OfTel and could see Cable as offering an escape route from the continuing harassment of the industry regulator.

The view is any bid would ultimately be a break up shot with at least a reduced involvement in the Hong Kong



MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year

operation a distinct possibility.

The market trend and the possibility of a share exchange bid was too much for BT shares, off 2p to 361.5p.

The market was under the shadow of New York. Friday's slump was too frightening even for a seemingly decoupled London and at one time the FT-SE 100 index was down 81.2 points. But New York, although volatile, put on a brave display and Footsie closed 35.8 points down at 3,674.5.

The feared wave of selling failed to materialise and talk of another Black Monday proved to be wide of the mark.

But the market remains exceedingly tender. A two day de-

cline of more than 80 points, following the expected interest rate cut, illustrates its fragility. Yet if New York continues its recovery, shares could bounce strongly today.

One influence which should not be overlooked is this week's Cheltenham race meeting, a notorious magnet for many of the City's big hitters. Trading during Cheltenham week is often lacklustre although the more nervous international atmosphere now evident could this time keep many traders on their toes.

Cable was not the only blue chip to survive the storm. Management changes lifted Rank Organisation 11p to

490p and shares with high dividend yields, such as Hanson and Thames Water, had little difficulty taking the strain.

Allied Domecq frothed 5p to 508p. Its £150m pub expansion was seen as an indication it could be near to completing the sale of its troubled brewing division, Carlsberg-Tetley.

Its brewing involvement restricts the size of its pub estate. But once Allied is free of the Carlsberg-Tetley tie there will be no ceiling on its retailing operations. Bass and Whitbread are the favourites to pounce. Although its ADRs were strong, Bass suffered a 7p fall to 755p; Whitbread lost 5p to 696p.

Banks and insurances were among the major casualties. Standard Chartered, high late on takeover speculation, fell 2p to 586p. It was also ruffled by the slide in the Hong Kong share market which lowered HSBC 41.5p to 1,005.5p;

General Accident fell 22p to 620p.

McKechie, the engineer, survived the gloom, gaining 1p to 472p. Credit Lyonnais Laing think the shares deserve to be higher. The shares fell because of cautious statements but the reaction was "unnecessarily alarmist". Profits should climb £7m to £52.3m this year and reach £62m next.

Costain, the builder, lost 11.5p to 79.5p. It rebutted takeover talk, which lifted the shares last week, and completed a demolition job by saying losses would be more than forecasts which approach £20m.

Memory Corporation had another eventful session. Although off their low they closed 13p lower at 142p; they were 553p in September.

Alvis lost 2p to 153.5p despite talk of a GKN bid and Aberdeen Trust firmed to 136p as speculation of a Commerzbank offer strengthened.

TAKING STOCK

CEIS International, one of the bio babes, resisted the slide. It was helped by the granting of a European patent for its digital system for detecting and counting low levels of microbial contamination in liquids. The world market for microbial contamination is estimated at \$4bn. The shares rose 5p to 107p.

Cavaghan & Gray, which supplies chilled foods to Marks & Spencer, eased 1p to 105p. Started in 1912 it came to market in December through a reverse takeover of the ailing Dalepak food business.

With Dalepak said to be responding to the C&G touch the shares could be under-valued. Williams de Broe, the stockbroker, expects profits of £500,000 in the year ending this month, climbing to £9.3m next year.

Alcoholic Beverages

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
Guinness	482.0	+	100
Heineken	477.0	+	100
Stout	477.0	+	100

Banks, Merchant

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
Barclays	477.0	+	100
HSBC	1005.5	-	100
Standard	586.0	-	100

Banks, Retail

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
Bank of Scotland	477.0	+	100
Bank of Ireland	477.0	+	100
Bank of London	477.0	+	100

Diversified Industrials

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Telecom	477.0	+	100
British Airways	477.0	+	100
British Petroleum	477.0	+	100

Breweries, Pubs & Rest

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
Carlsberg	477.0	+	100
Heineken	477.0	+	100
Stout	477.0	+	100

Building/Construction

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
Costain	79.5	-	100
Heathrow	477.0	+	100
London Dock	477.0	+	100

Building Materials

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Gypsum	477.0	+	100
British Portland Cement	477.0	+	100
British Tarmac	477.0	+	100

Chemicals

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Chemicals	477.0	+	100
British Petrochemicals	477.0	+	100
British Plastics	477.0	+	100

Electronics

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Electronics	477.0	+	100
British Telecommunications	477.0	+	100
British Telecommunications	477.0	+	100

Engineering

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Engineering	477.0	+	100
British Engineering	477.0	+	100
British Engineering	477.0	+	100

Food Manufacturers

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Food	477.0	+	100
British Food	477.0	+	100
British Food	477.0	+	100

Food Distribution

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Food	477.0	+	100
British Food	477.0	+	100
British Food	477.0	+	100

Household Goods

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Household	477.0	+	100
British Household	477.0	+	100
British Household	477.0	+	100

Insurance

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Insurance	477.0	+	100
British Insurance	477.0	+	100
British Insurance	477.0	+	100

Investment Companies

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Investment	477.0	+	100
British Investment	477.0	+	100
British Investment	477.0	+	100

Investment Trusts

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Investment	477.0	+	100
British Investment	477.0	+	100
British Investment	477.0	+	100

Leisure & Hotels

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Leisure	477.0	+	100
British Leisure	477.0	+	100
British Leisure	477.0	+	100

Life Assurance

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Life	477.0	+	100
British Life	477.0	+	100
British Life	477.0	+	100

Media

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Media	477.0	+	100
British Media	477.0	+	100
British Media	477.0	+	100

Printing & Paper

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Printing	477.0	+	100
British Printing	477.0	+	100
British Printing	477.0	+	100

Property

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Property	477.0	+	100
British Property	477.0	+	100
British Property	477.0	+	100

Retailers, Food

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Retailers	477.0	+	100
British Retailers	477.0	+	100
British Retailers	477.0	+	100

Retailers, General

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Retailers	477.0	+	100
British Retailers	477.0	+	100
British Retailers	477.0	+	100

Support Services

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Support	477.0	+	100
British Support	477.0	+	100
British Support	477.0	+	100

Telecommunications

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Telecom	477.0	+	100
British Telecom	477.0	+	100
British Telecom	477.0	+	100

Textiles & Apparel

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Textiles	477.0	+	100
British Textiles	477.0	+	100
British Textiles	477.0	+	100

Transport

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Transport	477.0	+	100
British Transport	477.0	+	100
British Transport	477.0	+	100

Utilities

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
British Utilities	477.0	+	100
British Utilities	477.0	+	100
British Utilities	477.0	+	100

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Government Securities

Index-Linked	Stock	Price	Chg	Vol
100	100	100	100	100

Shorts

Index-Linked	Stock	Price	Chg	Vol
100	100	100	100	100

Mediums

Index-Linked	Stock	Price	Chg	Vol
100	100	100	100	100

Longs

Index-Linked	Stock	Price	Chg	Vol
100	100	100	100	100

Rights Issues

Index-Linked	Stock	Price	Chg	Vol
100	100	100	100	100

Recent Issues

Index-Linked	Stock	Price	Chg	Vol
100	100	100	100	100

Index-Linked

Index-Linked	Stock	Price	Chg	Vol
100	100	100	100	100

A growl as bond markets show their teeth

It is equities that hit the headlines but bonds are arguably more important. It is always difficult in the midst of a period of market turmoil to judge how the twists and turns of a few days' trading will be seen in the long march of history. We can, for example, now put the crash of October 1987 into a historical perspective: a serious reaction of a market which had run far ahead of itself, but also a fine buying opportunity in what was still a strongly rising bull trend. At the time we just could see the reaction, not the opportunity.

Now the talk is of 1987 again, with (as noted here last week) the feeling that even if share prices around the world do end the year higher than they began, the end of the bull market will occur in the next 18 months. But when we can see this particular period in perspective I suspect there will be more attention paid to the bond market than to equities, for bonds will be seen as having the lead to equities. The peak in the bond market will occur before that of equities and therefore be a lead indicator of share prices.

We may well already have passed that peak: bond markets around the world have been in retreat for a bit over a month. The US 10-year treasury yield had come down to 5.6 per cent in the first weeks of the year; by the middle of last week it was about 6.1 per cent,



ECONOMIC VIEW
HAMISH McRAE

and yesterday it was between 6.4 and 6.5 per cent. If you look at the change in capital values, rather than in yield, that is a fall of about 15 per cent in little more than a month. Had that happened in equities, it would be ranked as a crash.

But it is a long way from noting the sharp reversal in the bond market to arguing that a similar reversal in equities will

on a 20-year view the interest differentials between countries with hard currencies and those with soft will shift: some currencies will establish a better rating, others a worse. But the lags are long. On paper, French yields ought to be at least as low as German. The perception of French yields is lower, and it is in current account

The starting point in trying to 'call' equity markets is to understand what is happening to bonds

take place. To some extent the two markets are driven by similar forces, but they can for quite a while move independently of each other, for the links are elastic. Still, if the bond markets continue to head south, at some stage this will unsettle equities. So the starting point for trying to 'call' the equity markets is to understand what is happening to bonds.

It is probably easiest to think in world terms, rather than in national, because in the medium term all the markets move pretty much together. Perhaps

surplus, not deficit. If you believe the politicians both franc and mark bonds will in any case be transformed into the new currency at present parties.

The perception of French yields is lower, and it is in current account surplus, not deficit. If you believe the politicians both franc and mark bonds will in any case be transformed into the new currency at present parties.

If you think in world terms, then, the question is this: what has happened globally that has

led to a deterioration in investor confidence in bonds?

Put aside fashion — markets are always susceptible to that and there will have been some element which simply reflects a change of mood. But behind that there seem to be two main forces at work. One is the lagged effect of a much easier money policy in the large developed countries; the other, growing confidence that the present pause in world growth will be just that and not a harbinger of a serious recession.

What has been happening to money and credit in the Group of Seven economies is shown in the graph. There was no clear trend right through the 1980s, though since inflation was much higher at the beginning of the decade than at the end, the flat lines concealed a loosening of monetary policy, which goes a long way towards explaining the late 1980s boom.

Then from 1989 onwards monetary growth and bank credit plunged, the fall associated with the early 1990s recession.

Now look what has been happening in the last year. Both lines are turning upwards, but there has been no significant rise in inflation so this represents a marked easing in monetary conditions.

This easing has not yet had any impact on world output for the lags in the system are at least 18 months, perhaps 24 years. But this easing has helped support world securities markets. Indeed one of the

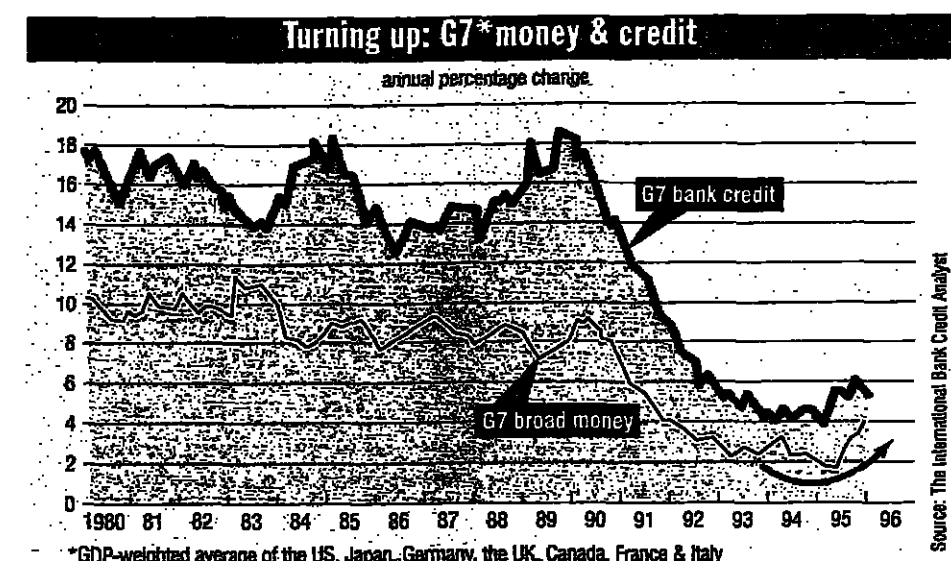
main reasons — maybe the main reason — for the strength of the bull market last year has been global liquidity. There is a lot of money sloshing about and it has to go somewhere.

But eventually money is likely to feed into goods inflation, as opposed to asset inflation, and that is one fear of the markets. We have seen a sharp rise in the gold price, something which would be absurd were the long-term downward trend in inflation secure. The gold market is not a lead indicator of anything, but it does give a crude measure of the level of fear about inflation.

Whether people are right to be worried is another matter, for if sustained, will have the effect of tightening monetary policy. If you believe in the power of the bond markets as a means of curbing inflation, investors have little to fear in the very long term.

Meanwhile, the markets expect that power by pushing up bond yields. So maybe what bond investors are really fearing is not the resurgence of inflation, but rather the steps that the markets will take to prevent any such resurgence.

As noted above, the second reason for market caution stems from a belief that further growth is secure and that we are therefore close to the bottom of the interest rate cycle. That is probably right, but only probably. Look around



the world and you can construct a decent argument to support the 'expect a recovery in G7 growth' view. The US

bring the prospect of faster growth by the autumn; Italy is OK; so is the UK, thanks to domestic consumers; likewise

that case there would not rise in short-term interest rates later this year and bond markets (though not equities) might well recover. But at the moment the danger of recession is not particularly evident.

How does all this square with the view that the long-term downward trend in inflation is secure? The answer is simply that in order to bolt down inflation, every now and again, bond markets have to show they have teeth by jamming up interest rates. See their behaviour in recent weeks as a growl.

One of the main reasons for the strength of the bull market last year was global liquidity

looks better than a few weeks ago; there does seem to be some growth in Japan at last; Germany and France will have very slow growth in the first half of this year, but that will

Canada. Outside the G7, the newly industrialised countries are continuing decent growth. Now this quite rosy view may be wrong and the world plunge back into recession. In

Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	D-Mark	Spot
US	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Canada	2.0835	2.15	2.15	13670	2.1
France	2.2582	2.25	2.25	14823	28.26
Germany	7.7408	7.68	7.68	10788	80.50
Italy	2.2827	2.28	2.28	16633	80.47
Japan	120.56	120.56	120.56	120.56	120.56
UK	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Switzerland	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Netherlands	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Spain	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Sweden	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Denmark	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Norway	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Finland	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Greece	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Portugal	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Ireland	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Belgium	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Austria	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Poland	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Czech Rep	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Slovak Rep	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Hungary	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Slovenia	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Croatia	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Serbia	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Bosnia	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Herzegovina	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
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Romania	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
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Albania	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
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Belarus	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Lithuania	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Latvia	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Estonia	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Armenia	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Georgia	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Azerbaijan	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Kazakhstan	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Kyrgyzstan	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Tajikistan	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Uzbekistan	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
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Colombia	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Peru	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Ecuador	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Bolivia	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
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Slovenia	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Croatia	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Serbia	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Bosnia	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
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Estonia	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Armenia	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Georgia	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Azerbaijan	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Kazakhstan	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Kyrgyzstan	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Tajikistan	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Uzbekistan	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Turkmenistan	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Paraguay	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Uruguay	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Venezuela	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Colombia	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Peru	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Ecuador	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766
Bolivia	1.5242	1.51	1.50	1000	0.6766

Interest Rates

Country	Rate	Term	Country	Rate	Term
US	6.00%	3 months	Japan	5.75%	3 months
Germany	5.00%	3 months	France	5.00%	3 months
UK	5.00%	3 months	Italy	5.00%	3 months
Canada	5.00%	3 months	Spain	5.00%	3 months
Sweden	5.00%	3 months	Netherlands	5.00%	3 months
Denmark	5.00%	3 months	Norway	5.00%	3 months
Finland	5.00%	3 months	Greece	5.00%	3 months
Portugal	5.00%	3 months	Ireland	5.00%	3 months
Belgium	5.00%	3 months	Austria	5.00%	3 months
Poland	5.00%	3 months	Czech Rep	5.00%	3 months
Slovak Rep	5.00%	3 months	Hungary	5.00%	3 months
Slovenia	5.00%	3 months	Croatia	5.00%	3 months
Serbia	5.00%	3 months	Bosnia	5.00%	3 months
Herzegovina	5.00%	3 months	Yugoslavia	5.00%	3 months
Romania	5.00%	3 months	Bulgaria	5.00%	3 months
Albania	5.00%	3 months	Moldova	5.00%	3 months
Ukraine	5.00%	3 months	Belarus	5.00%	3 months
Lithuania	5.00%	3 months	Latvia	5.00%	3 months
Estonia	5.00%	3 months	Armenia	5.00%	3 months
Georgia	5.00%	3 months	Azerbaijan	5.00%	3 months
Kazakhstan	5.00%	3 months	Kyrgyzstan	5.00%	3 months
Tajikistan	5.00%	3 months	Uzbekistan	5.00%	3 months
Turkmenistan	5.00%	3 months	Paraguay	5.00%	3 months
Uruguay	5.00%	3 months	Venezuela	5.00%	3 months
Colombia	5.00%	3 months	Peru	5.00%	3 months
Ecuador	5.00%	3 months	Bolivia	5.00%	3 months

Money Market Rates

Country	Rate	Term	Country	Rate	Term
US	6.00%	3 months	Japan	5.75%	3 months
Germany	5.00%	3 months	France	5.00%	3 months
UK	5.00%	3 months	Italy	5.00%	3 months
Canada	5.00%	3 months	Spain	5.00%	3 months
Sweden	5.00%	3 months	Netherlands	5.00%	3 months
Denmark	5.00%	3 months	Norway	5.00%	3 months
Finland	5.00%	3 months	Greece	5.00%	3 months
Portugal	5.00%	3 months	Ireland	5.00%	3 months
Belgium	5.00%	3 months	Austria	5.00%	3 months
Poland	5.00%	3 months	Czech Rep	5.00%	3 months</

A SPECIAL REPORT

COURIER AND EXPRESS SERVICES

Clients hand over more than packages



Getting it there: the same service in any language

Richard Gabriel, the former motorcycle courier who sold his Interlink franchise company for £50 million, has rejoined the courier fold. He has made a substantial investment in Mercury SpeedLink, a fledgling overnight express parcels service based in North Yorkshire.

While this may be of only passing interest to the rest of the industry, it underlines two emerging trends: the increasing success of franchising and the growth of the next-day market, both at home and abroad.

Next-day delivery rose by 15 per cent in a market whose overall growth was around 7 per cent. Three days is now seen as too long to wait for many goods – a fact reflected in the decline of the three-day market by a significant 10 per cent.

"The big growth is in computer-type industries, processing and manufacturing," says Peter Wigglesworth, general manager UK marketing for Parcelforce, the Post Office division which retains the lion's

Couriers are moving towards wider service, says Lynne Curry

share of the British market, and which continues to carry for more than 90 per cent of the UK's biggest companies. "It's also the fact that companies are holding fewer stocks."

Mercury SpeedLink was set up to capture a share of this next-day market by David Jacobs, a former freight forwarder who was part of the team which put together Group Four's NightSpeed service. "To give a level of service, it has to be in the hands of the people that are controlling it," Mr Jacobs says. "If the directors don't have the wherewithal to want to give that service, the company never will. They look at the bottom line and the volume and not at the service. We have the owner-operator mentality."

Mercury now has more than 30 franchises and claims, through its "quality first" philosophy and investment in bespoke information tech-

nology, to have rekindled Richard Gabriel's enthusiasm for the parcels business. "His first comment when he sat down was, 'I've seen enough parcels to last me a lifetime,'" Mr Jacobs says, "but we rekindled the fire."

Reliability from couriers is paramount when companies find it cheaper to have spare parts and stock express-delivered than to hold it in their own warehouses. But this brings its own problems. This way of operating, and the courier industry's willingness to serve it, is attracting ever-louder criticism on environmental grounds. No longer can the expansion of the courier industry be viewed in isolation from this by-product.

Paul Jackson, chief executive of industry consultants Triangle Management Services, says integrators are facing a greater likelihood of being hit by night-flight restrictions. The German

Green party, which has orchestrated a campaign to limit night-flights at Cologne airport – forcing TNT to shift to Liege in Belgium – has kick-started a campaign unlikely to stop at Cologne.

Road couriers are also coming under pressure to address the effect of their mileage. Parcelforce has appointed its first full-time environment officer and major couriers are looking at fuel consumption, cleaner fuels and alternatives to diesel.

A part-solution is shared loads and "middle order" and "added value" tailoring. Lynx, the parcels subsidiary of NRC, which turns over £80 million a year, will take over warehousing, stock-holding or dedicate staff to oversee particular parts of the customer's business.

Abu Aluminium, which manufactures ladders in Cornwall, uses Lynx not only to deliver its goods, but to carry

them to a warehouse in Bristol and to manage the warehouse on Abu's behalf. A small fleet of dedicated vehicles, working on shared use, collects components and delivers parts for truck manufacturers ERF.

Andy Holder, Lynx's spokesman, says businesses are looking for ways to live off their non-core activities, including the mail room, and Lynx has benefited from its willingness to move everything from an envelope to a pallet.

"The trend nowadays is towards giving the customer exactly what they want for their own particular operation. Off-the-shelf solutions still appeal to some companies, but a great deal more flexibility is required now to be successful."

Some 4,000 companies are now jostling in the UK to gain this competitive edge. It is not, as Peter Wigglesworth says, an industry which can rely on customer loyalty – most busi-

nesses have three or four carriers – and Parcelforce's dominant share of the market is a mere six per cent.

Greater segmentation is leaving some areas of the market in the hands of specialists. White Arrow has moved in on the home delivery market, along with other home-delivery services such as Littlewoods Home Express and Freemans Speedlink. Parcelforce's place at the head of the league is under attack from TNT, Securicor and Omega Express.

Couriers in this country have been slow to leap on to the train to Europe. According to Tim Weeks, UK automotive manager for UPS, which had six intermodal containers delivered last year, the infrastructure is lacking on this side of the Channel. "The longer the trip, the more effective the method of travel by train becomes. There's no doubt that there's a case for using trains in this country once the infrastructure is there, but the goods have to get to the stations."

Technology and discipline get the goods out

LYNNE CURRY

Jackie Billington's businesslike manner has come in useful for her new role as central services manager for couriers Mercury SpeedLink. If she gets a complaint from a customer, she levies a £10 penalty on the depot in charge of the consignment.

After the shock of being told to pay a fine, her first victim sat down to work out his reaction. "As I said to him," Mrs Billington said, from her desk at the company hub in Rugby, "it wasn't his fault; he should have passed the charge back to the driver, and if he'd done that, it wouldn't have happened again." The concept of devolved responsibility is a strong tenet at Mercury SpeedLink, a year-old, franchised overnight delivery company which is being substantially backed by Richard Gabriel, founder of Interlink Express, who sold Interlink in 1994 for £50 million.

The managing director, David Jacobs, says he accepts that inevitably, some packages will miss their schedule, but if the company bears of problems and contacts the customer, this usually not only saves the situation but impresses the customer. "We want to be proactive and phone our customers if we get deliveries wrong, or can foresee delays. We want depots to train their drivers to radio in about breakdowns or delays. No other couriers would dare to do it but we believe most couriers work on the same basis of trying to get away with it; that if it they don't tell the customer, the customer

won't find out. This ends up costing us more."

Hands-on couriers such as Mercury SpeedLink can mitigate glitches in this way. It uses hand-held lasers which match the depot code with the codes on the cages. Mistakes by human eye at this stage are a common cause of misrouting.

Larger operators are turning more to technology to minimise their frequency and, where human error creeps in, to enable the customer to see exactly where the parcel is. As one of the 10 sponsors of the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, Georgia, UPS is also the official supplier of package and distributions services. Having successfully delivered invitations to 197 countries to take part in July, and managed not to cause a diplomatic incident by missing anyone out, it now has the more complicated job of handling 11 million highly-desirable tickets.

"You can imagine the results if they fell into the wrong hands," Annie Garthwaite, the company's European public relations director, says.

To ensure that each consignment of tickets is tracked, UPS has installed a closed-loop package system that gives the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games direct access into UPS's delivery information, which is carried on a "maxi code", a sophisticated bar code. The code is monitored at every stage – right up to delivery, at which the package is signed for on an electronic clipboard immediately transmitted electronically. The sender is also faxed this proof of delivery.

Next day to US is a winner

LYNNE CURRY

Full-page broadsheet advertisements trumpeting one delivery service do not come cheap. But UPS thought it was worth it for Express Plus, offering delivery to 100 cities across America by 8am the next day.

Colin Beesley, UPS's UK marketing director, says the removal of borders in Europe has speeded up deliveries to the continent, and customers now expect a faster service to the US.

"We have been surprised who uses it," Mr Beesley says. "We knew financial services wanted a service like that, but we have also taken promotional items for photographic shoots and other stuff that hasn't been where it should have been."

Paul Jackson, of industry consultants Triangle Management Services, says that fast delivery to the US is now well established, but this has not stopped couriers moving in to claim a share. Last year Marken Worldwide Express, a small company based in Isleworth, Middlesex, doubled its turnover to more than £6 million partly on the back of what it claims to be the fastest service to the United States. It offers scheduled same-day services, taking advantage of the time lapses over the Atlantic to deliver the package eight hours after it is picked up in Britain.

Since it was established in 1980 by its two current direc-

tors, Ken Powell and Mark Adams, Marken has enjoyed an average annual growth rate of 30 per cent, but this year's exceptional 100 per cent, at a time of keen competition in the courier market, is put down to its philosophy of finding niche markets and developing them.

It offers scheduled same-day services to more than 70 cities in the US and Europe, and is used to carrying consignments connected with the music, film, TV and newspaper industries.

Parcelforce, the parcels division of the Post Office, also has plans to move into fast services to North America, while Federal Express already offers a next-day service.

A sign of growth in this industry is UPS's decision to cut the premium for "by 8am" delivery to £35 irrespective of the weight of the consignment. This makes the cost of an urgent document around £50.

But according to David Jacobs, managing director of Mercury SpeedLink, a franchised overnight express parcels service based in Ilkley, North Yorkshire, the benefits of bargain rates have tended to stay within the M25.

"The rating bands within the M25 are ridiculous because there are thousands of courier companies, all offering cheap overnight services to New York. When you start moving out into the provinces these rates more than double. We can offer London rates to somebody in Newcastle or Leeds."

Industry gripe

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COURIER AND EXPRESS SERVICES

When small is beautiful

LEE RODWELL

Size isn't everything when it comes to running a successful courier service.

"Because we're smaller than the big boys we can be more flexible," says Peter Jordan, sales manager of Marken Worldwide Express. "We offer, for example, a same-day service to Europe and the United States. If you call in the morning, we can pick up a package by 11am and get it delivered in Paris before 5.30pm. For the States, we would pick up around 6am - but we'd get it there that afternoon."

"Yes, it's expensive - but it's a lot less expensive than sending it via an on-board courier or taking it yourself. And often that's the only alternative."

The continued success of the smaller courier companies in the face of increasing competition is generally down to niche marketing. Marken, which was one of the first small independent couriers when it was set up in 1981, has grown in the past 15 years. Turnover last year was up to £6.4 million, but the company remains committed to providing a flexible and personal service from its base in Isleworth.

Customers who find its services invaluable include those working in the news and entertainment industries where deadlines are all important when master tapes, television footage or negatives are concerned.

Marken operate worldwide, but other independents concentrate on the UK market. Peter Wigglesworth, general manager UK Parcelforce, admits that customers can afford to pick and choose. "We have something like 4,000 competitors in the UK. If you include the companies that are little more than someone with a van. The smaller companies tend to focus on a particular service that meets a particular need, or they restrict operations to a small local area which means they can keep their costs down accordingly."

LYNNE CURRY

Courier companies are registering growing public concern about the environmental effect of their expanding market.

More vehicles on the roads mean more noise and more pollution. In some busy streets - London's are among the worst - carbon monoxide, a colourless, odourless and lethal gas, exceeds World Health Organisation limits.

Particulates, another significant emission, increase the risk of respiratory and cardiovascular disease and are thought to kill 10,000 Britons every year. Just under half is emitted by road vehicles, and diesels, which now comprise the vast majority of the commercial road fleet, emit about 10 times as much as petrol vehicles.

And there is noise pollution from night flights. The industry, propelled by European legislation and public pressure, is having to take notice.

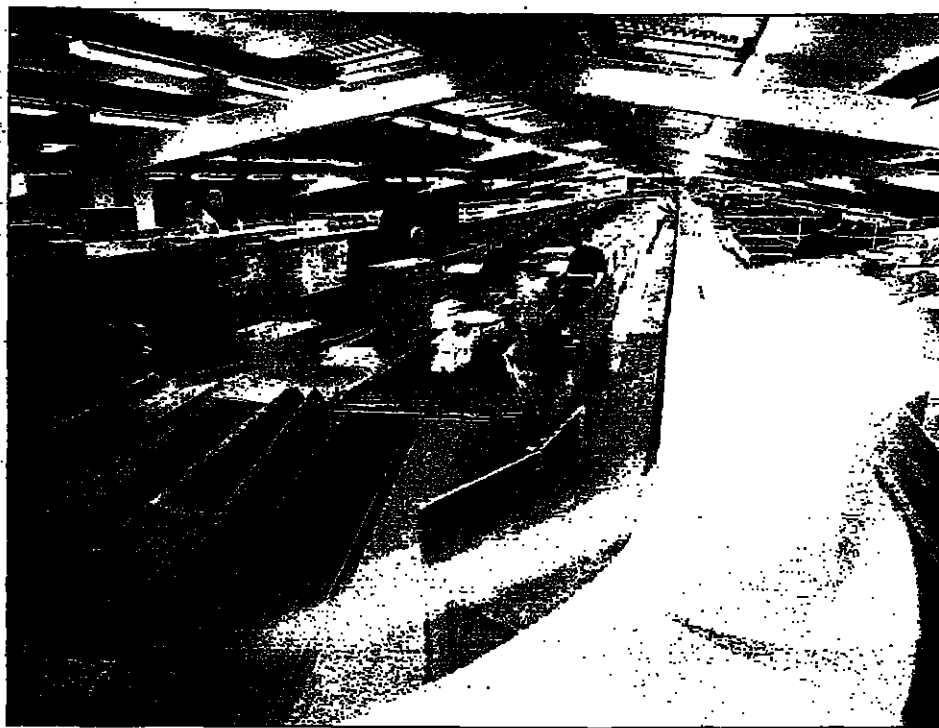
TNT announced last month that it was to pull out of its European air hub at Cologne and move to a £40 million new hub in Liege, Belgium. The announcement noted that Liege allowed night flights, and was in a sparsely populated area, but it did not refer to another big reason for the shift - the powerful German Green party, which has led a strong campaign against night flights.

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On the ground, public concern has also persuaded TNT to remove all the front bull bars from its fleet of 325 vehicles. Barry Sheldon, UK general manager, says the company responded to concerns about road safety and took the decision last autumn.

The environmental card is also being played by UPS. Last year, it introduced a team of walking couriers based in Holborn, stressing their speed and efficiency in densely packed business areas. Now the team is promoted for its green credentials as well as its efficiency.

Parcelforce, Britain's biggest carrier, still owned by the Post Office, has appointed its first full-time environment manager. Andrea Barnard is responsible for attacking four areas: energy consumption, pollution, waste and the consumption of natural resources. Last year,



Fast track: courier companies need to be constantly efficient to keep customers

the buyer but it can be tough for the supplier. We are the biggest, but we still only have 25 per cent of the market share and it is hard to see how some of the smaller companies will survive. Franchising - as Amtrak does - may be one answer."

If the smaller operators pride themselves on the good relationship they have with their customers, so, too, do the giants. In 1994 TNT linked up with Analog Devices, an international manufacturer of electronic components.

Previously the company had relied on different carriers to supply products to different locations, with resulting variations in levels of service and delivery times. They were often unable to track consignments and had little flexibility or control over the supply chain.

By forming an exclusive partnership with TNT Express Worldwide they were able to improve the service to their customers.

Another example of customer and courier getting closer together can be found in Dublin, the European base of Gateway 2000, an American company who have been direct-selling computer hardware across Europe for the past two and half years.

UPS not only ship 3,000 packages for them a day, but have set up an on-line customer help desk in their office, complete with a dedicated member of UPS staff, to answer customer queries on the delivery status of a package.

Paula Weir, Gateway 2000's customer service manager says: "UPS always handled our deliveries but we wanted to set up a system where all communications from our customers were dealt with through Gateway. That way you don't have people falling between two stools."

"Now if a customer wants information about a delivery we can give it to them by accessing

the UPS tracking system. UPS also have access to our system and can update us regularly. So we can call a customer to let them know their order has been shipped or to warn them if there is likely to be a delay because of bad weather."

"An additional bonus is that, although we have security controls when accepting credit cards, there are occasional instances involving fraud. UPS have been able to alert us when an address does not seem kosher - and so far they've made the right call every time."

LEE RODWELL

The introduction of the single market and the dismantling of trade barriers in Europe have brought new challenges for the express distribution industry.

Before January 1993 it was difficult for courier and express services to guarantee next-day morning deliveries. Although it was possible to get packages from one place to another quickly by air, many countries within the European Community had detailed customs formalities which meant that it could take up to three hours to process in-bound clearances on arrival.

In France or Italy, for instance, although an aircraft arrived at 6am, the goods might not be released from Customs until later that morning. As a result deliveries could not normally be made until the afternoon. However, changes in customs procedures have now given express delivery companies the ability to offer guaranteed morning deliveries - by 9am in major cities. As a result business is booming and the costs have started to come down. As Gareth Thomas, UPS Europe, International Express Manager points out: "Transport by air is considerably faster than by road, but one of the main barriers to the customer has been cost. With the growth of the movement of goods by air economies of scale are being created which are now being fed through to the customer."

Even so, road-based services also continue to grow. Ricky

Fiander, UK operations director at DHL points out that when speed is not an overriding factor, moving consignments by road makes sense. "It's cheaper and it's easier to make contingency plans. If an airport is fog-bound there's not much you can do."

Martin Lomas, European market sector manager at Parcelforce, agrees that road transport can give more flexibility. "With air, every second counts. With road you have more time. But we have a very good record with our night flights from our UK operational hub at Coventry. One of the reasons we are there is because the airport has the best fog record in the whole country."

In fact, the main players in the industry are investing in both road and air networks as their operations expand. TNT, for example, is investing 40 million on a new European air hub at Liege in Belgium to take over from Cologne, where a 2 million investment has already enabled them to double the "sortation" capacity: 15,000 pieces can now be handled an hour, compared to a previous 7,200.

Liege has been chosen because the airport is not congested, the area around it sparsely populated, road access is good and the site has expansion capabilities.

TNT is also using the Channel tunnel route into Europe and has recently opened a new depot in the Gatwick area to cater for the increasing demands of the

South East. Anthony Lock, general manager, Marketing TNT Express Worldwide, says: "The Channel tunnel has given us added capacity for overnight deliveries to Northern Europe providing greater flexibility and more time definite services."

Since the end of 1993 TNT has also built new depots in Europe to meet customer demands. These include three in the UK at Croydon, Stansted and London City airport. DHL is another company expanding its sites to enable it to get closer to its customers. In 1992 they had 22 local stations in the UK, now they have 43. Consignments are taken by courier to the local station where they are sorted on to destinations and then sent on to the nearest hub. The company's main hub in Europe is based in Brussels, but there are smaller hubs in the East Midlands, Copenhagen, Nuremberg, Cologne, Bergamo, Paris, Lyons and Madrid.

Road and air transport networks are improving all the time, the obstacles involved in customs clearance - and the paperwork that went with that - have been swept away. So are there still any bottlenecks?

"Not within the EU," says DHL's Ricky Fiander. "Elsewhere in the world some countries have customs regimes which are not, perhaps, geared to deal with the volumes which have rapidly increased over the past few years. And in some countries where they are trying to protect home markets -

textiles, for instance - there may be lengthy procedures rather than fast track clearance."

Martin Lomas of Parcelforce says that hold-ups within Europe can still occur if the customer has used insufficient packaging or given an incomplete address. "Even so, we've got access to more delivery addresses than any other carrier."

Gareth Thomas of UPS confirms that problems with customs clearance tend only to occur in less developed countries. However, when it comes to Europe he believes that there is one remaining bottleneck slowing down the use of air transport and that is linked to the issue of ground handling.

"Express operators already perform self handling at selected European airports such as Brussels, Barcelona, London Heathrow, Amsterdam and Copenhagen. Elsewhere, handling is carried out by airport staff and not necessarily the carrier."

"Air express and air cargo are often ideally situated in smaller airports where freight aircraft do not have to compete with passenger aircraft for slots and where road transport connections are least congested. We think the carrier should be given the opportunity to handle their own goods at all airports. It would speed things up and help us provide a fast and seamless service," he says.

"In many airports ground handling is a monopoly - and monopolies don't lead to the best service or the best price."

Industry takes green gripes on board

LYNNE CURRY

Courier companies are registering growing public concern about the environmental effect of their expanding market.

More vehicles on the roads mean more noise and more pollution. In some busy streets - London's are among the worst - carbon monoxide, a colourless, odourless and lethal gas, exceeds World Health Organisation limits.

Particulates, another significant emission, increase the risk of respiratory and cardiovascular disease and are thought to kill 10,000 Britons every year. Just under half is emitted by road vehicles, and diesels, which now comprise the vast majority of the commercial road fleet, emit about 10 times as much as petrol vehicles.

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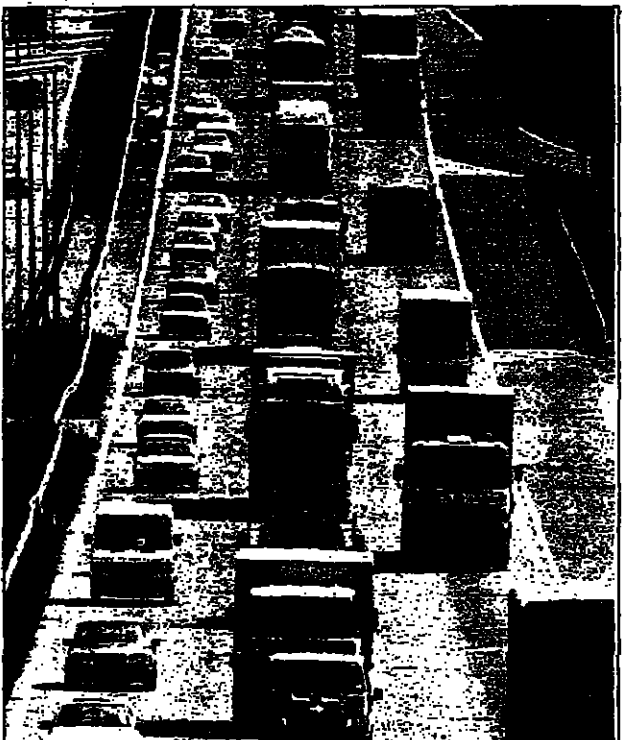
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Pollution levels in some areas of Britain exceed the World Health Organisation limits Photograph: Steve Morgan

Parcelforce won the Motor Transport magazine environmental award for its tractor unit fuel consumption of 9.5 miles per gallon, achieved by aerodynamics, good maintenance and driver training.

It has fitted speed limiters of 55mph on tractor units in advance of restrictions of 60mph - contributing to a fuel saving of £300,000 within two years. A new bar code labelling system has reduced the amount of paper in documentation by 80 per cent, and its targets cover improving miles per gallon, reducing CO2 emissions and fuel consumption of both vehicles and buildings. "We are well known in the industry for our efforts to lessen the impact we have on the environment," Ms Barnard says.

Heavily-polluting diesel may not always remain the dominant fuel, especially in towns and cities. Alternatives are proving promising, but expensive, not least because of duty imposed on fuels in UK.

The first compressed natural gas (CNG) vehicle in Europe, a van owned by UPS, is currently running between Isleworth and Westminster. Vehicles which run on CNG emit 90 per cent less carbon monoxide and significantly less nitrogen oxide than conventional diesel engines.

Tim Weeks, UPS's British automotive manager, says what comes out of the adapted Ford Transit van looks like vapour and people can breathe it at close range without keeling

over. "The reason there are not more of these around is that the running cost and the whole-life cost of the van are more expensive, and we wanted to be able to quantify that. The Chancellor did start to move in the last Budget on natural gas and reduced the duty by 15 per cent, but it still doesn't make it more cost-effective."

UPS has been testing tractor units powered by liquefied natural gas in Houston, Texas, and has discovered a 66 per cent reduction in nitrogen oxides and an 80 per cent reduction in particulates. In the US, it has 280 CNG vehicles on the road, with plans to triple that number before next year.

Mr Weeks says public rumblings about the number of delivery vehicles on the roads and the damage they may be doing are acknowledged by the industry. "We are tremendously aware of the pollution problem and have taken considerable steps to minimise it."

A new emission regulation, the Euro 2, comes into effect in August this year, imposing new controls on commercial fleets. TNT says it has fitted engines which comply with this regulation on its vehicles since 1994, at a cost of half a million pounds. In 1998, Euro 3, imposing tighter controls on emissions, will come into effect. Manufacturers will then be unable to sell vehicles without compliant engines, which will add some £1,800 to the price of each one and therefore will add to the cost of courier services.

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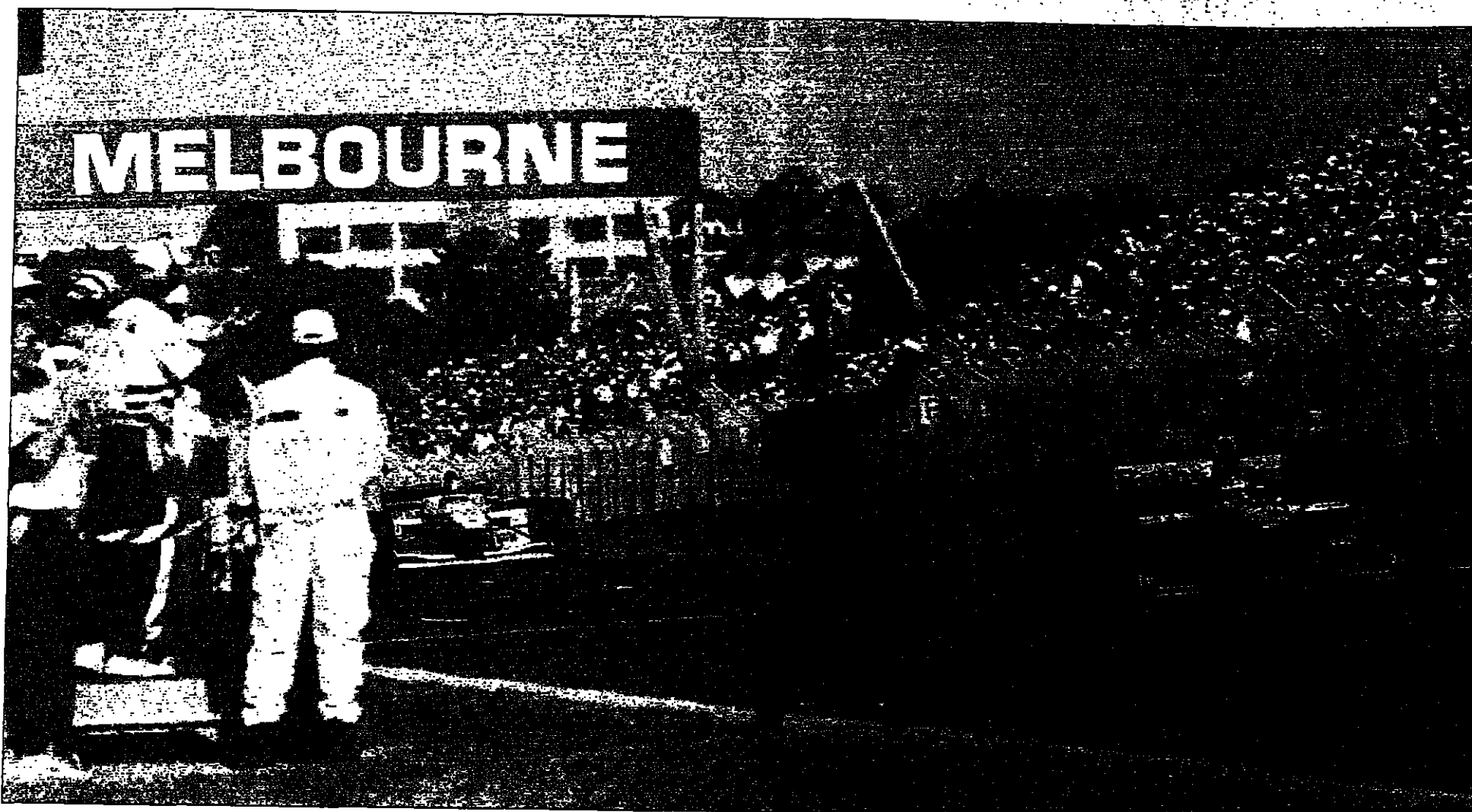
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THE INDEPENDENT

PLAY FORMULA 1 DREAM TEAM



The latest scores and results

Grand Prix Shopping List

AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX: DRIVERS' POINTS SCORED

£26m	1 M Schumacher	3
£23m	2 J Alesi	1
£20m	3 D Hill	27
£18m	4 G Berger	25
£15m	5 D Coulthard	-2
£13m	6 E Irvine	15
£10m	7 J Villeneuve	31
£8m	8 M Hakkinen	12
£6m	9 H H Frentzen	3
£4m	10 M Brundle	-5
£2m	11 R Barrichello	-1
£1m	12 J Herbert	0
£50k	13 M Salo	15
£40k	14 P Tarini	0
£30k	15 P Diniz	10
£20k	16 U Katayama	4
£15k	17 J Verstappen	-3
£10k	18 O Paris	4
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£4k	20 R Rosset	-2
£3k	21 A Montemini	9
£2k	22 G Fisichella	0
£1.5k	23 V Sospin	0
£1k	24 T Marques	0
£800	25 Y Lagorce	0
£600	26 H Noda	0
£400	27 I Inoue	0
£300	28 M Brundell	0
£200	29 J-C Bouillon	0
£150	30 K Black	0
£100	31 K Burt	0
£80	32 E Collens	0
£60	33 N Fontana	0
£40	34 D Franchitti	0
£30	35 N Larini	0
£20	36 I Magnusson	0
£15	37 A Prost	0
£10	38 G Tarquini	0
£5	39 K Wendlinger	0

DRIVER OF THE DAY: JACQUES VILLENEUVE

The Canadian rookie, son of the great Gilles, dominated his first Grand Prix, taking pole position, setting the fastest lap of the race and leading until the final few laps, when a persistent oil leak threatened to silence his Renault engine and he was forced to back off. But he was



delighted with second place, and far-sighted Dream Team managers who realised that the reigning IndyCar champion was spectacular value at £18m can feel justifiably smug. A Jacques in the box is worth 31 points, the top driver score in the Australian Grand Prix.

The waiting is over: after the hype and hoopla of the close season, the fantasies of Dream Team managers became reality in Melbourne. Damon Hill wore the victor's laurels, but his team-mate Jacques Villeneuve came up trumps with the Dream Team points. A one-two for the Williams drivers means plenty of

points to share out among Dream Team managers who selected one or more of Hill, Villeneuve, Williams and Renault for their package. Hill top-scored in the morning warm-up session to take his total points score to 27, but that is no more than is to be expected from a £23m man.

The other expensive superstars, Michael Schumacher and Jean Alesi, proved poor value for money in Melbourne. Among the bargain basement drivers, Mika Salo and Pedro Diniz stand out, with 15 and 10 points respectively. The Finnish Tyrrell driver looks a good bet for more high-scoring finishes this season. Diniz's place at Ligier owes more to the size of his wallet than the magnitude of his talent, but the wealthy Brazilian knows how to stay out of trouble and is sure to register plenty of finishes.

Williams predictably dominate in the chassis department, where

Tyrrell's neat, reliable little car represents good value. But for Jordan fans it was, in their driver Martin Brundle's words, "the weekend from hell". Brundle somersaulted spectacularly out of the race on the first lap, and lasted only a minute in the restarted race. Brundle's team-mate Rubens Barrichello also retired, meaning a painful -5 for all Dream

Team managers who selected Jordan chassis. Jordan's engine supplier, Peugeot, was also the only major manufacturer not to score well in Melbourne.

Now the circus moves on to Interlagos for the Brazilian Grand Prix on 31 March. Will it be an early-season double for Damon, a Ferrari first for Schumacher, or a

home-town maiden victory for Rubens Barrichello? Dream on...

Look out for your chance to register the week before the Brazilian Grand Prix (March 31) in The Independent and the Independent on Sunday. You could win a trip to the San Marino Grand Prix. Rules are as previously published.

AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX: CHASSIS POINTS SCORED

£20m	40 Benetton	10
£18m	41 Williams	20
£15m	42 Ferrari	16
£13m	43 McLaren	11
£11m	44 Sauber	0
£10m	45 Jordan	-5
£8m	46 Ligier	11
£6m	47 Tyrrell	12
£5m	48 Arrows	-3
£3m	49 Minardi	-1
£1m	50 Forti	0

AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX: ENGINE POINTS SCORED

£26m	51 Renault	20
£18m	52 Ferrari	16
£15m	53 Mercedes	14
£12m	54 Peugeot	0
£10m	55 Mugen	12
£8m	56 Ford V10	11
£6m	57 Yamaha	13
£4m	58 Hart	0
£3m	59 Ford Zetec V8	0
£2m	60 Ford ED V8	0

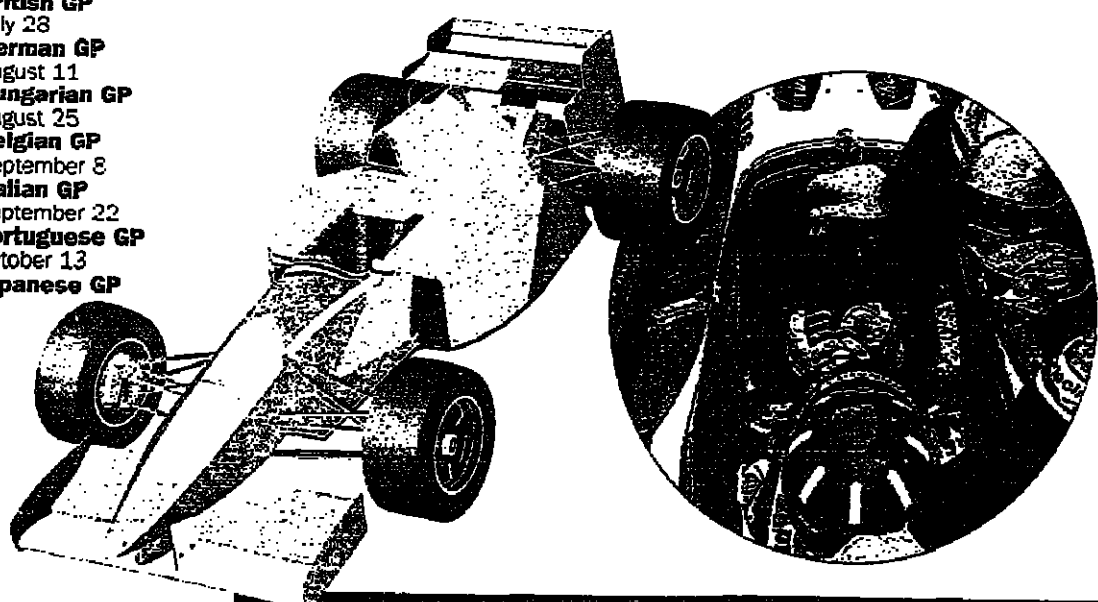
GRAND PRIX '96 RACE SCHEDULE

March 31
Brazilian GP
April 7
Argentinian GP
April 28
European GP
May 5
San Marino GP
May 19
Monaco GP
June 2
Spanish GP
June 16
Canadian GP
June 30
French GP
July 14
British GP
July 28
German GP
August 11
Hungarian GP
August 25
Belgian GP
September 8
Italian GP
September 22
Portuguese GP
October 13
Japanese GP

WIN a drive in a Grand Prix car

The Dream Team manager with the highest number of points at the end of the Grand Prix Championship season will win our top prize - a drive in a 650bhp F1 car. You will be flown to the AGS team's training

school in the south of France for the most exhilarating experience of your life. The school specialises in F1 courses and provides all the racewear and instruction you will need for a day driving F1 and other single seat cars.



Top 50 Dream Teams

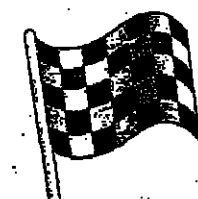
Out of our top 50 teams, 23 teams came joint 1st, each scoring 71 points. The other 27 teams came joint 24th, each scoring 69 points. More scores are being entered for this race, check the Results Phoneline for the latest information. The winner will be informed later in the week.



1 Burton Racing
1 Duffden Rug 3
1 Totham Turbos
1 Hill Marker Racing
1 Piston Broke
1 Grid Lockers
1 MWD
1 Eurosport
9 BBCS
1 Sammarc A
1 Suffolk and Fast
1 Mad Fleet
1 Speedy Squirrel Racing
1 The Really Good Team
1 Red Roosters
1 Spanner Ballet
1 Dampo 1
1 Calisto
1 Cor Look At That

1 Wood Racing
1 Virtual Reality Racing Team
1 Road America
1 Endorphin Machine F1
1 Solomon GP
24 Pacemaker Formula 1
24 Nino Racing
24 AK Racing
24 Manda G.P.
24 Strides Fliers
24 Dinky Racing
24 Carr
24 S.T.B. 2
24 The Loose Wheel Nutts
24 Pistonbrock 7
24 Eddie Stowbart Racing
24 Tyrell Terrors
24 Josh Racing

24 Jacks The Lad
24 D M O Racing
24 Jones Phantom Racing Team 2
24 Demon Dave
24 S E B Racing
24 Rag Racing
24 G T Racing 2
24 Glowing Carbon
24 The Hinde Car All Stars
24 The Famous Five
24 Russell Racing
24 Fifti Corsa
24 Enthusiastic Enthusiasts
24 Kingsland GP



DREAM TEAM registration: 0891 891 805

TEAM POSITION CHECK LINE: 0891 891 806
RESULTS & TOP 50 TEAMS: 0891 891 807
HELPLINE: 0171 602 9222

مكتبة الأمل

The new stadium will hold 75,000. Are 22,000 extra places really worth the complete destruction of an excellent stadium?

It is no disrespect, I hope, to Murrayfield and Lansdowne Road to say that the final matches in the Five Nations Championship will be played at the two leading grounds in the British Isles: the National Stadium, Cardiff (still referred to by its old name, Cardiff Arms Park), and the Rugby Football Union's headquarters ground at Twickenham.

I regret I cannot join with my colleagues in the rugby-writing trade, or most of them — Frank Keating is the only exception I know — in praising the RFU's new construction, "Magnificent modern stadium" is the phrase most commonly brought into play. Well, it may be modern, and it is undoubtedly a stadium, but magnificent it most certainly is not.

The fundamental trouble is simple. It possesses no atmosphere. With a capacity of 71,000 (74,000 if boxes are included) it is still a dead sort of place.

This is a characteristic which modern arenas often possess, even when they have nothing to do with sport. In the autumn I attend the conferences of the political parties. The Opera House, Blackpool, and the Pavilion, Scarborough, 19th century buildings both, have an atmosphere which is absent from the modern conference centres of Brighton, Bournemouth and elsewhere.

The reason why these new places lack atmosphere is the same as it is for Twickenham. There is no mystery about it. The action is too far away from the audience. This has an anaesthetising effect. There is no sense of the participation you still

feel at a large football ground such as Highbury Stadium or a club rugby ground such as Stradey Park, Llanelli.

Twickenham has a further grievous fault. For not only is the banking of the seats insufficiently steep. Not only are the seats themselves too far removed from the pitch, so that from certain points the participants look like Subbuteo-sized rugby players. The stands have also been designed on the assumption that we enjoy a Mediterranean climate.

These great, open spaces would be admirable in Béziers, Montpellier or Narbonne. On a wet and windy January Saturday in Middlesex they are a less happy idea. Though television sets are provided, one for every two seats, in the press box, I should still prefer not



ALAN WATKINS
on rugby

to be soaked when the wind is in the wrong direction.

I have, I may say, no great nostalgia for the Twickenham of Obolensky's try or Louis Jones's debut for Wales against England. The

ghosts of Wavell Wakefield and Adrian Stoop do not haunt me. The old ground clearly had to change. My regret is that the change was not better managed.

The Welsh Rugby Union did manage it at Cardiff. The passing of the old Arms Park was certainly not to be regretted. It seemed to be constructed largely of corrugated iron. The prudent spectator would hunch up his trousers a couple of inches to protect the bottoms from the urine which would flow copiously down the terraces like a Welsh mountain stream. He would, if really thoughtful, apply a coating of dubbin to his shoes beforehand for the same protective purpose.

Those days when the WRU, inspired by its then treasurer, Kenneth Harris, reconstructed the Arms

Park, with the National Stadium on one side and a pitch for the Cardiff club on the other. Harris and his colleagues succeeded both in removing the many inconveniences of the old ground and in preserving the old atmosphere — even though the singing may not be what it once was.

I may be biased, because I always enjoy my visits to Cardiff. The train service is good, the ground is only minutes' walk from the station and I invariably meet old friends. Whether I shall continue to enjoy my occasional expeditions is more doubtful.

Fortified by a grant from the Millennium Fund — so costing the Welsh National Opera its own grant for a new opera house — the stadium is to be entirely rebuilt on an axis turned by 90 degrees. In many years of writing about rugby, it is the great-

est piece of vainglorious folly that I can remember.

The reason is supposed to be that, as Wales are hosts to the 1999 World Cup, a suitable grand stadium must be available for the Final. But what is wrong with the National Stadium as it is today? It holds 53,000. The new stadium will, it is planned, hold 75,000. Are 22,000 extra places really worth the complete destruction of an excellent stadium?

Not only do I foresee financial disaster on a colossal scale. Even if that is avoided, the WRU will no longer own its own ground, as it does today. For a majority holding will be taken by the South Glamorgan County Council. To allow that outcome, when the WRU will no longer be master of its own house, is folly of a high order.

Old hand prompting the Potters

Tonight's derby is special for Mike Pejic, the Stoke City coach. Phil Shaw reports

Anyone doubting the enduring power of apocryphism in football need look no further than Stoke-on-Trent, that cluster of communities in search of a city. Mike Pejic played in a League Cup final, three FA Cup semi-finals, in Europe and for England, yet still regrets that he never appeared in a "proper" Potters derby.

A quarter of a century has elapsed since Pejic, now 46 and coach to Stoke City, first paraded the left side of the Potters' defence. At times, they were the length of the league ahead of Port Vale; stylish porcelain to Vale's plain earthenware. But even then, when either dropped in on the neighbours, the crockery flew.

"There was an end-of-season match at Stoke in 1970, but you couldn't call it a friendly," recalled Pejic, whose own tackling could demolish a china shop. "Vale won 3-2 and it was a bit spicy. There were a few stitches flying about that night."

He left Stoke for Everton seven years later, since when the gap between the local rivals has narrowed to the point where they meet regularly. Vale, indeed, have won the last two meetings on enemy soil, although there is more than tribal honour at stake at Vale Park tonight.

Stoke, fourth in the First Division, need the points in their push for the Premiership. Vale, 23rd, need the points to avoid falling perhaps two divisions behind them. Pejic, who ironically did much in tandem with John Hughes to challenge the status quo, will be alongside Lou Macari in the visitors' dug-out. He might well have spent the evening on the other side of the world.

After six years with Vale came to a "sour" end, which he has contested in court with initial success. Pejic had a spell in Kuwait and a stint as manager of impoverished Chester. Last

September, he was within days of starting work as director of coaching for the state of Victoria when the call came from the Victoria Ground.

"I'm not saying I wouldn't have turned down Australia for any other club," he said, "but it would have had to be something very special. Stoke had massive emotional pull for me because I came here from the age of five with my dad. It's in the heart."

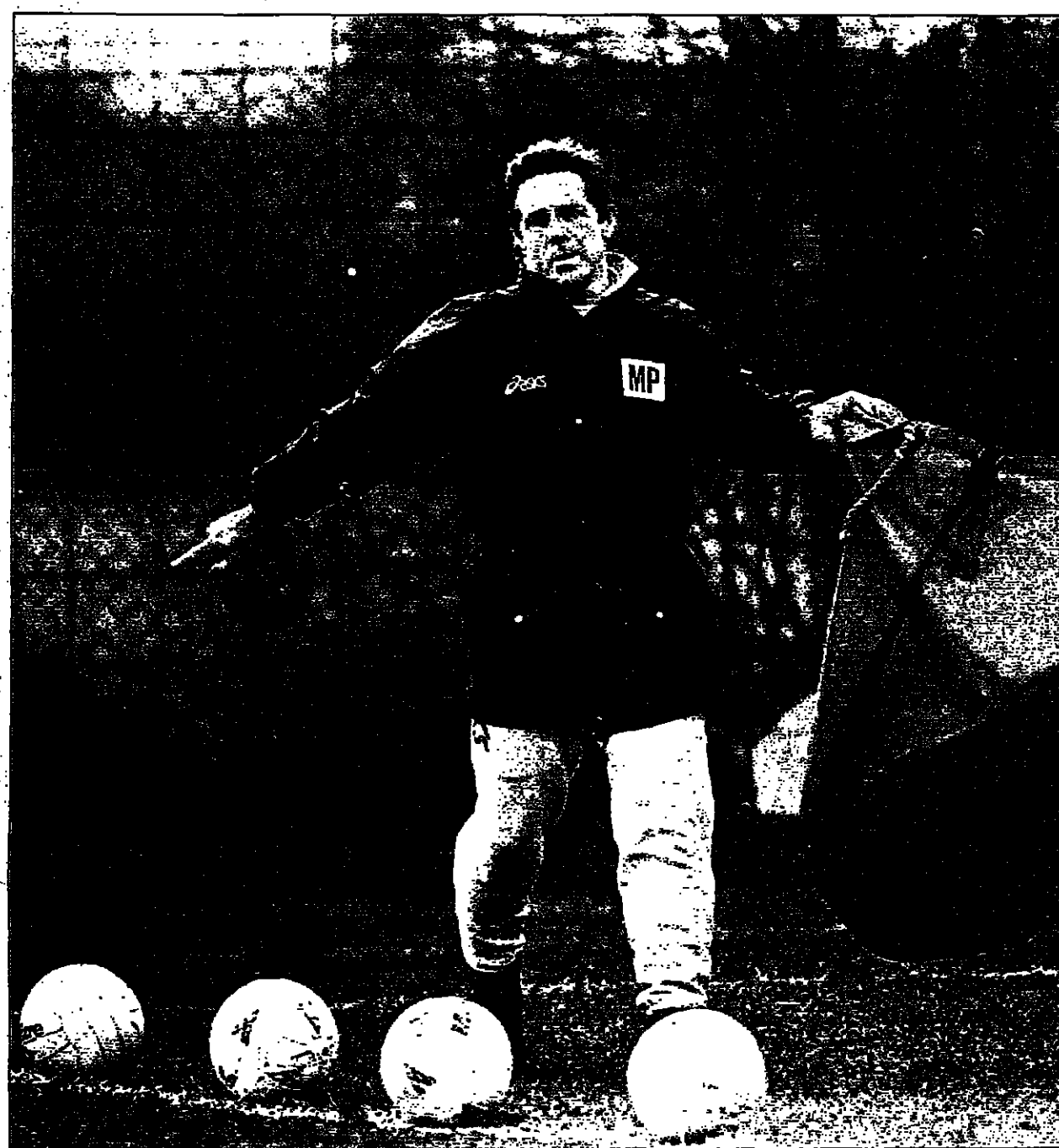
Soon after Pejic's homecoming, with Stoke struggling through an opening sequence of three wins in 14 games, the staff were summoned to a meeting. "There were problems with a certain group of players and the atmosphere within the club wasn't right," he said. "Lou asked for our opinions and we gave them."

"He then made major decisions which sorted out the difficult players. One went and the others were isolated. It showed that the staff were united and meant business."

The subsequent upturn has left Stoke better placed to regain their position in the top division than at any time since their dismal departure in 1985. Macari's teams tend to be portrayed as the antithesis of the subtly skilled veterans who graced the stripes under Tony Waddington. Pejic, the link between the eras, argues that comparisons are ill-conceived.

"The game has changed so much in terms of rules, tactics and systems of play. We had great artists in the '70s side, but sometimes under-achieved. There's a real drive, a sense of purpose about the place now."

"When I played we had a back four of local lads — myself, Jack Marsh, Denis Smith and Alan Bloor — with Gordon Banks behind us organising everything. But in midfield and up front we played it very much off the cuff. It was almost a team of two halves."



Lining them up: Mike Pejic prepares Stoke for tonight's vital match against Port Vale Photograph: Simon Wilkinson

That experience, while by no means turning him against flair, prompted Pejic's interest in coaching. Between jobs he has been in demand with the FA and is a devotee of Don Howe, whose dour image he calls "ridiculous". Macari, a kindred spirit, shares his standards on fitness and discipline.

"Lou wants the players very hard. His thinking is that if they can't work or run, they're a waste of time. I'd say he did his homework on me in that respect."

It is a mistake, Pejic insists, to confuse their common outlook with an adherence to the long-ball game. As in the case of Howe, he feels public per-

ceptions are simplistic. Macari may like to get the ball forward quickly, but once it is in the final third he prefers small, mobile forwards who are good at creating and exploiting space to big target men.

First there was Mark Stein, then Paul Peschisolidi, now Mike Sheron and Simon Surridge — all players in their manager's image. Sheron came from Norwich before Christmas in exchange for a striker already loaned to a Second Division club. Surridge is a refugee from Barry Fry's revolving doors at Birmingham, which also provided Stoke's creative hub, Nigel Gleghorn.

Even if Macari wanted to

spend, the club are £3m in debt, playing to an average gate of 11,600 in an area ravaged by recession, and planning a new stadium. In the foreseeable future, they have little choice other than to rely on the talent currently available to them.

Premiership status would, of course, make refinancing imperative. As Pejic points out, such thoughts are premature with nearly a third of this season left. Stoke face three other teams in the top six before the end of March, not to mention tonight's confrontation.

As a summariser with BBC Radio Stoke, he was able to "scout" Vale in the FA Cup ties

with Everton and Leeds, being impressed by the latter's defence. While Rudge's men have a Wembley date in the Anglo-Italian Cup final next Sunday, Pejic is sure the pressure and pride will concentrate their minds.

"I was involved with Vale when the derbies started again in '89. The build-up was very exciting and the players were certainly aware of what it meant to the supporters."

Which, according to Pejic, is an unusually localised partisanship. "When I played for Everton against Liverpool in the semi-final, I remember cars with scarves of both teams hanging out. You'd never see that in the Potteries."

Seles poised to reach the top on merit

Tennis
JOHN ROBERTS

Monica Seles is expected to be co-ranked as the world No 1 with Steffi Graf on merit, rather than by dispensation, after completing the sixth tournament of her comeback in Florida later this month.

Barring elimination in the early rounds of the Lipton Championships, which commence on 21 March, it is anticipated that Seles's points average will be higher than Graf's on the rankings computer come 1 April.

When Seles returned to the WTA Tour last August, it was decided that she would share the top ranking with Graf for her first six events, having been the No 1 when stabbed in the back by a Graf fanatic in Hamburg in April 1993.

After six tournaments (or 12 months from the date of her return, whichever came first), Seles will be co-ranked with the player whose average is immediately below hers.

Seles has won three of her first five events, Toronto, Sydney and the Australian Open, finishing runner-up to Graf at the United States Open and to Iva Majoli of Croatia in Tokyo.

"It appears that Monica will have a higher average than Steffi," said Kathy Remke, the Corel WTA Tour's director of management information systems. "Assuming that Monica does normally well at the Lipton — she doesn't have to do exceptionally well — she should come out ranked No 1 with Steffi."

As a special consideration, Seles's total points currently are divided by the number of tournaments she has played. Normally, total points are divided by a minimum of 14, or the total number of tournaments played, whichever is greater. Graf, having played 10 events going into the Ever Cup, which is taking place in Indian Wells, California, is still having her points divided by 14.

Seles, who withdrew from the Ever Cup in order to rest

an ailing shoulder, will continue to have the advantage of a divisor until she has participated in 14 tournaments within a 52-week period (or for a maximum of 18 months). Only then will she be given an individual ranking.

Graf, who is competing in her first tournament since undergoing foot surgery at the end of last year, will be aware that German prosecutors are close to bringing her father, Peter, to court to answer charges of evading tax on his daughter's earnings.

Proceedings are expected to take place during the summer, and therefore could coincide with the French Open. Wimbledon or the US Open. Asked if Steffi Graf would be compelled to appear at the hearings, a spokesman for the High Court in Mannheim said: "That is a decision for the court then. We can't say at this time."

Jennifer Capriati's ranking will be decided after the Lipton Championships, the third tournament of her second comeback following a lengthy period of disaffection, which led to drug-related problems. The Olympic champion marks her 20th birthday on 29 March.

Tim Henman, the 21-year-old national champion from Oxford, achieved a career-high ranking of No 64 by reaching the semi-finals of last week's ATP Tour event in Rotterdam. He is now only 20 places behind his Davis Cup team-mate, Greg Rusedski.

TODAY'S NUMBER

4

The minutes it took the 35-year-old Diego Maradona to score for Boca Juniors on the first day of the Clausura football championship in Argentina. Maradona's penalty helped Boca to a 4-0 victory over Gimnasia, who finished the match with nine men.

RACING RESULTS

CARLISLE

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"You know what this means because at that time 2 years ago they were so one really something

Irish wait for Rowell's choice

By their line-out calls in the victory at Murrayfield, England revealed an almost total reluctance to aim for Bayfield's replacement, Garath Archer, but even so it is hard to imagine Archer's exclusion after only one cap, and Bayfield himself accepts that he will not have another chance until next season.

Nevertheless, uncertainty

JUST THE TICKET: A guide to what's on where for the sporting spectator

The international opening of the 22,000 National Hockey Stadium at Matti Järvinen on Sunday 24 March, when England's men play India and the women entertain France, sets in motion a high-profile programme of matches in the build-up to Atlanta.

On 13 April Great Britain women continue their Olympic Games preparation by tackling the Netherlands. The following month it is the turn of the men when Germany, the Olympic champions, are

Details of forthcoming events with information on tickets and venues should be sent to: The Sports Desk, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL. Fax: 0171 295 2894.

Compiled by Paul Maher

Compiled by Paul Maher

Rafsanjani plays the Kremlin card

TI = 12 March, 96

ROBERT FISK
Tehran

Boris Yeltsin and Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani may seem unlikely allies, but you could tell from the glint in the Iranian President's eye yesterday that he may have pulled another fast one on the Americans. Just as he sprang a peace plan on Washington in Bosnia, so the Russian President is strengthening his hand in tomorrow's Middle East summit – unknown, it seems, to either the United States or Israel.

"Well yes, we have just received a message from President Yeltsin," Mr Rafsanjani told us yesterday in an off-hand way, a remark – or so it was made to seem – in a press conference answering an Iranian international trade relations. "He suggested that Iran and the Russian Federation take the initiative against terrorism. We are also negotiating with them to have government co-operation in the field as well. We have felt deeply the effects of terrorism and we are ready to co-operate with any group seriously interested in this subject."

The eyes twinkled again. Isolated Iran may be by President Bill Clinton's Israeli-supported policy of "dual-containment" but Ali Akbar and Boris, it would seem, may have a surprise or two in store for us.

"Yes," Mr Rafsanjani said again, "he [Mr Yeltsin] proposed an anti-terrorist congress and I agreed with this. Were we to take this seriously? The message had been brought from Moscow by the Foreign Minister, Ali Akbar Velayati, on Friday after the Iranians performed a few useful services for the Russians: shoring up another four-month ceasefire in

Tajikistan, for example, and urging peace upon Armenia and Azerbaijan. While it is still unclear how many seats his supporters won in last week's parliamentary elections – and while he has only another 11 months to the presidency – the Iranian President has clearly not lost the old Rafsanjani magic. The Billy Bunter curl beneath the turban has grown grey and the cheeks are apple red. The creases round the big, watchful eyes have grown deeper. But his fine brown cloak was of Scottish plaid and he positively soaked up the lights of the television cameras in Tehran yesterday. After all, it was only a few days ago that he achieved the clerical ascent from Hojatoleslam to Ayatollah.

Of tomorrow's "anti-terrorism" summit in Egypt he evinced a mixture of contempt and no interest. "I see no reference only as a pre-employment – because the people themselves support [against Iran] will not provide a framework to fight terrorism."

"We do not believe peace [process], which cold peace, because the rights of Palestinians destroyed. Million placed Palestinians Jordan and Lebanon ferret. No man of int can possibly believe a peace can be permanent."

In reference to Mr trade embargo on Iran he announced last year's meeting in New York wearing a kippa. Mr Raf said that "when Mr wears the hat of the Jew head, it is quite obvious

oriented towards certain things: this is his 'punchline'. Iran was not interested in the US-Israeli peace plan although the remark was carefully worded – "from the early days, we said we would not hinder this peace...". The world's mistake was to show no tolerance for nations like Iran which criticised the nature of this peace.

And the Rafsanjani peace plan? "Racial discrimination by an ethnic government known as a Jewish government is not acceptable. But if all groups – Jews, Christians and Muslims – can live together there and the displaced people be returned and an election held to allow the majority to rule, that would be acceptable." Which means, since the displaced Palestinians of 1948 and their children amount to 3,500,000 souls, that the land of mandate Palestine would return an Arab Muslim

government. In other words, goodbye Israel. And so, with grinding inevitability, we returned to US-Israeli claims that Iran was behind the Hamas suicide bombings.

President Rafsanjani pooched the suggestion that Iranian hit-squads roamed abroad after the regime's enemies: no mention here of the assassination squad from Tehran locked up for trying to kill Shahpour Bakhtiari in Paris, only to be freed in return for French hostages in Beirut.

Iran supported Hamas as a freedom movement but it did not support political violence. It gave moral, not military support. "To say that we should condemn the struggle by Palestinians, no, we shall never condemn this struggle. But if you say that we are supporting violent actions by these movements, this is not true. We are not." Tut-tut, you

could almost hear the Ayatollah saying. Tut-tut.

He wagged an admonishing figure at President Saddam Hussein for killing his sons-in-law – "There was no mercy!" he claimed the leader of the world's most radical Islamic state – and gently warned Jordan against trying to take over Iraq. He is a regular listener to the BBC Persian service: "I hear you every night and it's nice to meet you," he greeted a stunned BBC representative. But he never lost the edge in his voice towards Washington.

"America may think that with the end of the Soviet Union, they can be a father – or, should I say, a godfather – for the world, but we are a strong Muslim country... and if insecurity is created in this country, many parts of the world will become insecure." Which was either a threat or a warning.

In 1992, the police statement said, Mr Cagici's group kidnapped a Mujahedin activist, Ali Akbar Gorbani, and handed him over to Iranians who interrogated him and then killed him. The group allegedly also put bombs in two Mujahedin-owned vehicles and handed a reconnaissance report to the Iranians about the activities of the pro-Shah activist Abbas Golizade, who was kidnapped in late 1992.

Mr Cagici was said to have first gone to Iran in 1982, where "after a short period of training he came back to Turkey and founded the group called 'Hizbollah' in Turkey".

Police broke up the Hizbollah group in 1984 – it was not the last to bear that name in Turkey – and Mr Cagici later formed the Islamic Action Organisation. Travelling to and from Iran with group members for what police said was "political and military training", the gang apparently financed themselves by raids on jewellery shops and other thefts.

The police's first break against the Islamic Action Organisation came in 1993, when they caught a member trying to steal a car. He had a beeper with a message that led them to one of the group's operations houses. Most group members appear to come from the Kurdish south-east of the country.

Iranian media have concluded that Iran ordered the killings and that Iran may also have had a hand in killing three prominent secularists in Ankara – Muammer Aksoy and Bahriye Ucoik in 1990 and Ugur Mumcu in 1993 – the Turkish foreign ministry said it had no information on the case.

The Iranian embassy denied that its diplomats directed the group. A spokesman wondered aloud if Turkish police declarations were not timed to coincide with tomorrow's anti-terrorism summit in Egypt.

Iran had close links with a pro-Islamic gang that killed at least two prominent Turkish secularist writers six years ago, Istanbul police said yesterday. On Thursday they arrested a senior gang member, Irfan Cagici, at a "safe house" in the city.

He was shown to reporters after four days of interrogation that police said revealed his leading role in the killing of the anti-fundamentalist columnists Cem Erimci and Turan Dursun. The police said that Mr Cagici's small group, which called itself the Islamic Action Organisation, had also repeatedly helped Iran to act against the People's Mujahedin, the Iranian opposition group.

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Police broke up the Hizbollah group in 1984 – it was not the last to bear that name in Turkey – and Mr Cagici later formed the Islamic Action Organisation. Travelling to and from Iran with group members for what police said was "political and military training", the gang apparently financed themselves by raids on jewellery shops and other thefts.

The police's first break against the Islamic Action Organisation came in 1993, when they caught a member trying to steal a car. He had a beeper with a message that led them to one of the group's operations houses. Most group members appear to come from the Kurdish south-east of the country.

Iranian media have concluded that Iran ordered the killings and that Iran may also have had a hand in killing three prominent secularists in Ankara – Muammer Aksoy and Bahriye Ucoik in 1990 and Ugur Mumcu in 1993 – the Turkish foreign ministry said it had no information on the case.

The Iranian embassy denied that its diplomats directed the group. A spokesman wondered aloud if Turkish police declarations were not timed to coincide with tomorrow's anti-terrorism summit in Egypt.

Iran had close links with a pro-Islamic gang that killed at least two prominent Turkish secularist writers six years ago, Istanbul police said yesterday. On Thursday they arrested a senior gang member, Irfan Cagici, at a "safe house" in the city.

He was shown to reporters after four days of interrogation that police said revealed his leading role in the killing of the anti-fundamentalist columnists Cem Erimci and Turan Dursun. The police said that Mr Cagici's small group, which called itself the Islamic Action Organisation, had also repeatedly helped Iran to act against the People's Mujahedin, the Iranian opposition group.

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Race is on to stop a crisis becoming a catastrophe

Patrick Cockburn on the chances of success at tomorrow's Mid-East summit

Jerusalem – "In the moment that remains to us between crisis and catastrophe we may as well have a glass of champagne," a French diplomat said at a conference in the 1930s, deflating expectations that a meeting of international leaders could do much to avert the Second World War.

As at least 22 world leaders, led by President Bill Clinton, gather at the Movenpick Hotel in the Egyptian resort of Sharm el Sheikh tomorrow, they are likely to be less frank about their limited ability to prevent the crisis in relations between Israel and the Palestinians turning into a catastrophe.

But at least it would not take much to make the peace accords of the last three years unravel. More suicide attacks in Israel would probably force Shimon Peres, the Prime Minister, to send tanks into Gaza and the West Bank cities: public opinion would leave him with little choice.

Palestinians would certainly fight back. There are 30,000 armed troops – called "police" in the treaty – in the autonomous areas who would resist. The expectations of 2.3 million Palestinians in the occupied territories have also

been raised by Oslo. They would not accept reoccupation peacefully.

Mr Peres can see this well. Last week, he said Israel was only "a quarter of an hour away from achieving peace". But too many Israelis think the clock is stuck and going backwards if peace means more, not less, dead bodies.

The Sharm el Sheikh conference, chaired by Mr Clinton, and President Mubarak of Egypt, and attended by the main European leaders including President Boris Yeltsin, President Jacques Chirac, Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Yasser Arafat, the new Palestinian President.

Mr Peres, who faces the electorate on 29 May, is fighting for his political life. Not surprisingly, he has given the conference an ecstatic welcome. A Labour minister said cynically that "one photograph of the anti-terror conference equals a thousand election ads".

Benjamin Netanyahu and his Likud bloc, hoping to oust Mr Peres and Labour, suspect Sharm el Sheikh might give him a political kiss of life. "If the conference embraces Arafat in-

stead of cracking down on him, this would be a whitewash," a Likud statement said. "The conference will not solve the problem. The heads of state will come and go and we will be stuck with the terror."

For Mr Arafat, Sharm el Sheikh has advantages. Palestinians may not have their own country but the world will do a lot to preserve their autonomous areas. The meeting will bring Mr Arafat closer to

the US, always one of his goals. It will give him a forum in which to cultivate other Arab leaders, many still cool to him because of his role in the Gulf war. But the conference also has dangers for the Palestinian leader. It may push him further than he wants to go. He knows he must appear a US or Israeli puppet.

Israel wants the conference to be about terror ected against itself. Mr Peres says he wants it to take three critical

measures: an attack on Hamas finances, exchange of information about Islamic militants between states, and tougher border controls. None is likely to be productive: Middle East governments rely on their secret police and do not share information readily except with close allies and often not then.

The conference might damage Hamas by cutting its links with conservative countries like Saudi Arabia and Jordan. De-

spite its offices in Iran and Syria, Hamas was created in 1988 by the Muslim Brotherhood in Gaza, which was heavily supported by the Hashemite monarchy in Jordan and the Saudi royal family. In its first year, Hamas was even smiled on by the Israeli authorities, who thought it would siphon off support from the PLO.

Another problem is that the US wants the conference to be directed against Iran. This re-

quires some rewriting of recent history. Islamic Jihad, a smaller, less political organisation, was traditionally the chosen instrument of Iran.

Not much outside support would have been necessary to stage the recent attacks. Three of the latest bombings were carried out by recently recruited students using old Italian mines from Sinai. No skill, experience or equipment was necessary other than a willingness to die.

'Super Tuesday' set to be Dole's triumph

JOHN CARLIN
Washington

Imagine an Iraqi presidential election. Imagine a British general election. Imagine England in a game of one-day cricket against anyone. Each would generate more suspense than today's "Super Tuesday" leg of the Republican presidential primary contest.

The Republican faithful in Texas, Florida, Oklahoma, Mississippi, Tennessee, Louisiana and Oregon will be going to the ballot boxes today not so much to elect Bob Dole as to appoint him. The only remaining question, and the one that will soon dominate the agenda of Washington's political professionals, is who Mr Dole will select as his vice-presidential running mate.

The question is more critical than it usually is at this stage in the presidential race because, on his own, the down, weary senator from Kansas is not considered to have a hope against the telegenic Bill Clinton. Put Colin Powell, the black, retired general who declined to run for president, next to him on the ticket, however, and, as the American football commentators say, "now we have a ball game".

Whereas every poll which pits Mr Dole in a straight contest against Mr Clinton leaves Mr Dole the loser by 10 points, a Time-CNN poll conducted last week showed that Dole-Powell would beat Clinton-Gore 47 to 45.

Alfonse D'Amato, a Republican senator who is co-chairing Mr Dole's campaign (and co-incidentally chairing the Senate Whitewater investigations), added his substantial voice to a chorus of Republican whisper-

ers praying for the Dole-Powell dream team to come true: "Colin Powell would invigorate the Republican Party, would help it to become a winning ticket," Mr D'Amato said yesterday.

Mr D'Amato, who has been accused in the past of a tendency to be economical with the truth, insisted in an interview with the Associated Press that he had not talked to Mr Dole yesterday.

Arithmetic of Super Tuesday

Delegates needed to clinch nomination: 996

Tally so far:

Delegates at stake today:

former head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the general himself does not appear to be willing. If the likes of Mr D'Amato are still persevering it is because, first, General Powell has declared himself to be a Republican and, second, because having proved so publicly indecisive last year about his political intentions, he might yet be prevailed upon this year to come to the rescue of the old soldier Dole.

If General Powell cannot be persuaded, the figure most often mentioned for the Republican vice-presidential candidacy is Christine Todd Whitman, the Governor of New Jersey. She would lend some symbolic balance to the sense that she is young and dynamic, that she is an East-coaster (rather than a Mid-Westerner), and that she is a woman.

On policy, however, she shares Mr Dole's fiscal conservatism and, by the standards of the Republican Party's fundamentalist Christian factions, social liberalism. Like General Powell, she is pro-choice on abortion. Which means that if Mr Dole settles on her he should be prepared to expect "Pitchfork" Pat Buchanan to lead his Christian crusaders into battle.

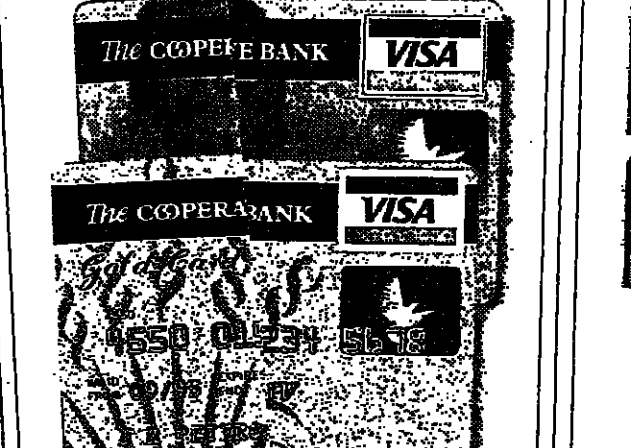
Last week Mr Buchanan, who intends to keep on running for the Republican nomination no matter how many times he is lapped by Mr Dole, said that if General Powell emerged as the vice-presidential candidate he would lead conservative Christians in a walk-out from the party's convention in San Diego in August.

However, while Mr Dole himself is known to be enthusiastic about running with the

about General Powell, but had every intention of doing so. The reason pragmatic Republicans believe General Powell is what the party needs, of course, is that before his announcement in November that he would not be running in 1996, poll after poll had showed he was the people's choice.

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Missile exercises: Washington accuses Peking of reckless but maintains policy of constructive engagement

China warns US of Taiwan test site

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A hazardous game of brinkmanship gathered pace in the Taiwan Strait yesterday as Chinese troops readied themselves for new exercises. The United States moved an aircraft carrier into the region, and the Taiwan president, Lee Teng-hui, said the island's people "must unite and struggle on".

In Peking, the Chinese foreign minister, Qian Qichen, said it was "ridiculous" for anyone to call for the United States to intervene in defence of Taiwan. "I think these people must have forgotten the fact that Taiwan is a part of China's territory," he said. "It is not a protectorate of the United States."

Nine days of naval and aircraft exercises using live ammunition are due to start today, the latest move by Peking to intimidate Taiwan ahead of presidential elections on 23 March. Taiwan government officials said preparatory troop movements had been detected, and that the exercises at the south end of the strait would include missile firings, anti-submarine measures, artillery and bombing runs.

China has marked out a large rectangular zone for the exercises, which reaches to about 40 miles from the Taipei-held island of Quemoy and also touches the mid-point of the Taiwan Strait.

The US Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, calling China's actions "reckless", said a battle group led by the aircraft carrier *Independence* would be moved "somewhat closer" to Taiwan "in a position to be helpful if they need to be". A guided-missile frigate and a

destroyer have been added to the group, which will be in international waters between Taiwan and the Japanese island of Okinawa.

An Aegis-type cruiser, the *Bunker Hill*, has been positioned to the south of the Taiwan Strait to monitor China's exercises. The nuclear-powered carrier *Nimitz*, plus support ships will also arrive in the region "in about two weeks", according to the Pentagon. With all these vessels in place, the US force would include more than 110 carrier-based strike aircraft and ships with more than 200 Tomahawk cruise missiles.

Mr Christopher said the Chinese tests could have "grave consequences". China's actions, he said, "smack of intimidation and coercion. So that is a situation of great concern to us."

Anthony Lake, President Bill Clinton's national security adviser, said in a television interview that if the Chinese military exercises led to "accidents", Peking would be "held accountable". And he added: "We have also said that if they attack

Taiwan there will be grave consequences."

US officials have said that while they believe China's public assurances that it will not invade Taiwan, the decision to dispatch the naval task force had been guided by "prudence". However, the officials were at pains to stress that the US intended to maintain its policy of constructive engagement with China, described by Mr Christopher as a country "so important we must find some way to manage those areas of disagreement".

Mr Lake said the White House still planned to persuade the US Congress to renew favourable trade conditions for China when a current agreement expires this summer.

Mr Qian yesterday again blamed President Clinton's decision last year to grant a visa to Mr Lee as being the prime cause of the present escalating tension. But he also said that if the Taiwan leadership could "amend its ways... then the situation will be eased", hinting specifically that Peking has identified President Lee's campaign for a United Nations

seat for Taiwan as a key concern.

"Taiwan is part of China's territory, so how can it be eligible for the UN?" he said.

President Lee, who is also certain to win the elections, so far shown no sign of looking for compromises. Yesterday he said Taiwan would try "very carefully" but that Taiwanese "must unite and struggle on even if Communist China test-fires 100 missiles and 1,000 bullets to push Taiwan into the corner".

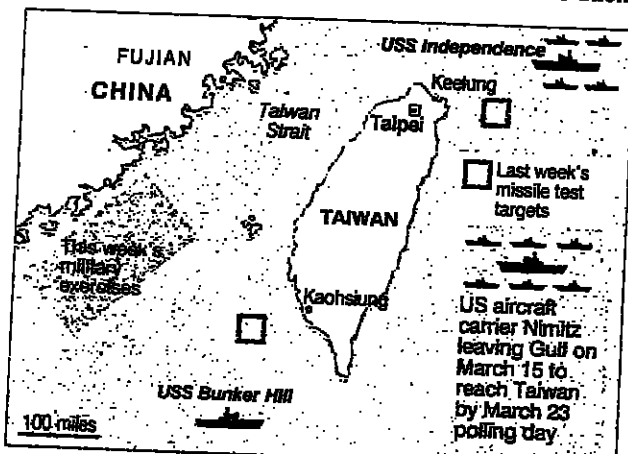
He told an election rally: "We do not want to have confrontation or war with Communist China."

In the Taipei New Park, which commemorates the victims of the 1947 massacre of native Taiwanese by the Nationalist Party, those at the monument yesterday lunchtime did not seem particularly concerned by recent events. "I do not worry, I do not think Peking will attack," said a 21-year-old student, Lin Shin-hwe. But she added: "The US cannot help Taiwan. I think America is afraid of Peking."

In the capital Taipei, some Taiwan academics and analysts were, however, voicing much greater fears. Tim Ting, the chief consultant for Gallup (Taiwan) and Professor of Sociology at the National Taiwan University, said: "A lot of people here believe things will go back to normal after the 23 March polls. I think that is ridiculous."

Dr Ting said he feared it was "too late" to find a compromise that would maintain the status quo ante. "I think President Lee is happy to see the confrontation with China, and the US getting involved... He will continue his policy. There is no retreat," he added.

Leading article, page 14



Going down: A dealer at the Taipei stock exchange checks data yesterday. The market fell more than 2 per cent by close of business. Photograph: Simon Kwong/Reuters

IN BRIEF

New Australian PM modifies royal oath

Sydney — John Howard, Australia's new Prime Minister, and a monarchist, declined to swear allegiance to the "heirs and successors" of the Queen when he took office. He pledged allegiance to the Australian people and the Queen in the ceremony before her representative in Australia, Governor-General Sir William Deane. Mr Howard opposed moves by his Labor predecessor, Paul Keating, to make Australia a republic by 2000, but he would not be drawn on the significance of his oath. *Reuters*

'Stalinist' warning

Sofia — Bulgaria's ruling Socialist Party is warning the functions of the Stalinist state and restoring ties with the secret services. Andrei Lukanov, a BSP deputy and businessman, said. The *Standard* daily quoted him as saying he had evidence pointing to a "return to Stalinist methods". *Reuters*

Help on the way

Rome — The United Nations World Food Programme said it had sent a second shipment of rice for flood victims in North Korea after its worst natural disaster, which struck last year. A cargo ship with 5,635 tons of rice bought in Thailand plus 903 tons on behalf of the aid organisation Caritas left Bangkok for the North Korean port of Nampo. *Reuters*

Peaceful gesture

Dushanbe — President Emomali Rakhmonov said he favoured a UN plan to end the conflict between his hardline government and the Islamic opposition. He told parliament: "We must have political wisdom and resolve all issues by negotiations." The UN plan would restore political parties, reopen newspapers and establish a Congress of the People to advise the government. *AP*

Accident-prone

Cebu — At least a dozen people were injured when the floor collapsed in a room where Philippine officials were investigating a ferry sinking. The inquiry was being held in the central city of Cebu when the floor gave way and sent tables and other furniture crashing. Norberto Nepangue, captain of the *Geotchen-1*, which sank near when the floor caved in. He was among those injured. *Reuters*

Tito's yacht for sale

Belgrade — A yacht that belonged to Yugoslavia's late Communist leader Josip Broz Tito will be put on auction for a starting price of \$2m (£1.3m). Montenegro's government said. The *Galeb* (Seagull) was extensively used by Tito during his 35-year rule. It was also former Yugoslavia's main training ship for navy cadets. It has 300 beds, two kitchens, a bakery, luxuriously decorated salons, hairdressers and a clinic. Its log says Tito spent 324 nights on board *Galeb*, built 60 years ago. Tito died in May 1980. *AP*

Koreans clamour for justice in the trial of two presidents

RICHARD LLOYD PARRY
Seoul

Seoul is freezing this week, and the touts had been queuing for three nights. They knew what

the tickets were worth.

For this sum, a little less than the average worker's monthly wage, you could buy a small square of blue paper, and a few hours in chamber 417 of the Seoul District Court. But more than one hundred people had camped out with the touts, and every other seat was taken. South Koreans have been waiting 16 years for the Kwangju trial and, every Monday for the rest of the month, it is going to be the greatest show in town.

Yesterday, at half past nine, to an angry roar from a few hundred demonstrators, three large buses arrived. Inside the gates, beyond the range of the egg-

dozens of lawyers and guards, but seemingly unassailable, one more unpleasant aspect of the country's turbulent past.

Chun, a former general who seized power in 1979, was notorious for having ordered the bloody suppression of a civilian uprising in the south-western city of Kwangju five months later.

His successor, Roh, was also implicated in the massacre. But Roh had the distinction of introducing democracy to South Korea, having defeated a divided opposition in the first presidential elections in 1988. Five years later, he gave way to the present President, Kim Young Sam, a hero of the democracy movement who had

perpetrated the Kwangju massacre. He appeared to be their greatest insurance policy. Despite repeated calls for their indictment, he repeated his belief that they must be left to the judgement of history.

Then, in October last year, late prosecutors announced an investigation into claims that Roh had amassed a \$355m (£22bn) worth of bribes in exchange for government contracts awarded during his presidency. Within a few weeks, Chun and Roh were charged with bribery and then the 1979 coup and Kwangju massacre.

President speaks of

expressed the hope that "this historic trial will help prevent such unfortunate incidents from being repeated", and few Koreans would dissent from these noble aims.

Incidentally, President Kim is doing himself a power of political good. This week sees the beginning of an election campaign in which his New Korea Party had been expected to lose its parliamentary majority. Having snatched the opposition's main complaint against him out of their hands, Kim is looking, if not safe, then stronger. He has also placed a decisive distance between himself and the slush funds which, according to his opponents, had directly bene-

made disasters, overshadowed by the constant threat from the Stalinist regime in the North. South Korea is never a predictable place and Mr Kim's crusade has caused quiet consternation among the conservative establishment, particularly in the military. But it has also tapped a vein of powerful emotion among ordinary Koreans, which may yet be difficult to control.

"We've waited for 16 years, and our suffering has never stopped," said the mother of a student killed at Kwangju. "We've come here to rip them to pieces. We've come to take Chun, and if each of us takes just a piece of his body, not even a bone will be left over."

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Simon Callow takes us into the not so genteel suburban world of Tom Sharpe in *The Throback*. The tenants of Sandicott Crescent find life takes a decidedly unpleasant turn when scheming Lockhart Flavus takes an interest in their little foibles and mayhem quickly becomes a commonplace of life.

If all you know about Ted Hughes is that he is Poet Laureate, here is a chance to explore his major works with haunting readings by the poet himself. Ted Hughes Reading his poetry is a generous selection that includes

two seminal pieces, *Wodwo* and *Crow*.

Patricia Hodge reads a tale of subtle sibling rivalry in Joanna Trollope's *A Spanish Lover*. Lizze has it all, a husband, four children and a job running an art gallery. Twin sister Frances has only her career - and an exotic lover. Which sparks more than just sisterly concern from Lizze...

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CITY & BUSINESS EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

London holds firm as panic spreads to Asia

TOM STEVENSON
and DAVID USBORNE

London held the line in the face of overnight panic selling on Asian bourses yesterday, with the FT-SE 100 index of leading shares falling just 35.8 points to close at 3674.5. That compared with a lunchtime low of 3122 points and weekend fears that markets were preparing for a re-run of 1987's meltdown.

By the time Wall Street opened yesterday afternoon sentiment had swung completely, with the Dow swiftly clawing back 31 of the 171 points it lost last Friday in a selling frenzy that convinced many the US market's long party was finally over.

Last week's sell-off was in response to an unexpected jump in US non-farm payroll numbers, which appeared to shut the

door on further interest rate cuts in America. But by yesterday New York analysts had come to the conclusion that a stronger economy would actually be good for corporate profits.

William LeFevre, an analyst at Eurenkrantz King Nussbaum, said: "The average point drop Friday was two for each Dow stock. That's not the end of the world. We're not worried about a recession or inflation and we're not looking at an economic disaster."

Market watchers were playing down the scale of last week's sell-off, comparing the 3 per cent decline with the record 22.6 per cent plunge in October 1987.

Dealers in Europe had braced themselves for another sell-off yesterday but there was no feeling that a repeat of the 1987 global crash was on the cards. A signal of an apparent change

in market sentiment was the calm reaction to data showing strong US house sales, although they indicated the same trend seen in Friday's jobs figures.

Bob Semple, markets analyst at NatWest Securities, poured cold water on the worst scare stories: "There was an over-reaction on Friday and there has now been time to reflect. There is no real crash on the cards. If people had been in a really bearish mood, they would have fled on the strong US housing data as another reason to sell. I'm reasonably sanguine about the outlook."

But in the Far East, the combination of Wall Street's fall and the heightening tension between China and Taiwan wreaked havoc on Asian stock markets. Hardest hit was Hong Kong, which suffered its worst fall since 1987 after the Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen said Taiwan's first direct presidential elections on 23 March were part of a plot to win independence for the island.

Peking takes over control of Hong Kong from Britain in July 1997, and the renewed tension over Taiwan has done nothing to calm local investors' fears about the handover.

The Hang Seng index of Hong Kong's blue chips plunged 7.3 per cent as sellers focused on fresh Chinese military exercises off Taiwan. It closed 820.34 points lower at 10,397.45, the second largest one-day points loss and the Hong Kong market's fifth biggest percentage collapse.

Tokyo, which had opened relatively firmly, took its cue from Hong Kong, falling to the year's closing low of 19,796.29, a drop of almost 2 per cent as buyers remained sidelined by worries over the budget impasse as well as Wall Street. Shares in Singapore and Sydney also lost more than 3 per cent on the day.

Friday's Wall Street retreat was sparked by surprisingly strong February jobs reports, in-



Grim gestures: Anxiety shows at (clockwise from top left) the stock exchanges of Hong Kong, Tokyo and the Liffe trading floor in London yesterday

cluding a drop in the unemployment rate from 5.8 to 5.5 per cent. The figures in turn buoyed hopes of any further cut in interest rates by the US Federal Reserve. Bonds suffered their worst day in almost two decades.

But by the evidence of yesterday morning, at least, it appears that most investors believe the trend of the US

stock market remains upwards. "The market is proving this morning that it's trying to go higher," remarked William LeFevre. "Friday was not the end of a bull market and the beginning of something bad."

Even so, market observers think Wall Street is likely to remain jittery all week. Attention will be closely focused on the

bond market, where prices recovered a little yesterday, even though the January house-sales figures showed a surprising jump of 4.2 per cent when analysts had expected a drop. Also critical, will be US inflation figures due to be released on Thursday and Friday.

"I think we're entering a much more volatile market," commented Ricky Harrington, an analyst at Interstate-Johnson Lane. "I believe the market is changing character."

Comment, page 19

Nick Knight, Nomura
"A bounce on Wall Street after the decline was pretty inevitable. But it might have been better in the long run if there had been a genuine bloodletting now. If the market goes up now there is a danger that people will take the chance to sell - there could be a reaction to the reaction to the action."

Bob Semple, NatWest Markets
"There was an overreaction on Friday and there has now been time to reflect. There is no real crash on the cards. If people had been in a really bearish mood, they would have fled on the strong US housing data as another reason to sell. I'm reasonably sanguine about the outlook."

Richard Davidson, Morgan Stanley
"This is not like 1987, or 1994 when the bond market crashed. The outlook for the markets is not as negative as it was then nor as negative as some people now think it is. There is still scope for European interest rates to fall, and they are certainly not going to go up. A grinding downward move in the US need not hit the European markets. There have been 11 corrections of more than 10 per cent in the US in the past quarter century. Europe has gone up in 5 cases. When it went down it was either because of a global event like the invasion of Kuwait or a short sharp correction like the 1987 crash."

Dorey Miller, Société Générale
"There is a lot of volatility in the markets because we are at that stage of the economic cycle where prospects are better. There is a risk of another correction as long as there is that volatility. But the fundamentals are still very good - we have a steady growth, low inflation environment. There is a lot of underlying strength in the US economy."

Trevor Greenham, Merrill Lynch
"Last Friday's jobs figure was a rogue number, yet the market jumped on it as evidence that the US economy had turned on a dime. We think the economy will slow and expect further interest rate cuts. The worry for equities is that earnings growth will be affected, disappointing investors and there is a lot of nervous money invested on Wall Street."

Industrial weakness calms markets

DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

British industry has been stuck in the doldrums since the new year. Industrial output declined in January while the rise in prices at the factory gate last month was surprisingly small.

With a separate survey suggesting that retail sales growth slowed a little in the year to February, yesterday's batch of statistics helped restore calm to the financial markets and encouraged economists who thought last week's reduction in the cost of borrowing was justified.

"The Chancellor is unlikely to feel fully vindicated by his decision to cut base rates," said David Walton at the investment bank Goldman Sachs. However, most City analysts said there was no prospect of another cut in the short term as long as the financial markets remained unsettled. Others think there is a danger of greater inflationary pressure later in the year.

"The end of the period of base rate cuts is approaching," Mr Walton said. Indicators such as growth of the money supply measures and house prices

flation outlook, he said.

However, yesterday's figures showed that the trend in industrial output remained subdued in January. It fell 0.5 per cent in January due to lower output of energy and weaker North Sea gas extraction, the result of a one-degree improvement in the average temperature for the month.

Production was flat in the three months to January, and only 1.7 per cent higher than a year earlier.

Manufacturing output regained the same level as its mid-

partially reversing a 1.5 per cent fall in December. But it was 0.6 per cent lower in the three months to January than the previous three months, and only 0.5 per cent in the year.

Manufacturing was weaker across the board during the last three-month period. Ti only area of strength was output of durable goods - consistent with surveys which have shown sales of goods such as furniture and carpets starting to climb.

"The trend in manufacturing output remains chronic

Col, UK economist at brokers James Capel.

A further sign of weakness in industry was a smaller-than-expected rise last month in both manufacturers' materials costs and prices charged at the factory gate.

Input prices fell for the second month, down 0.3 per cent on a seasonally adjusted basis. They rose 3 per cent in the year to February, the slowest rate of growth since June 1994. Their level has fallen by nearly 2 per cent during the past six months.

Society bonanza may broaden

holders of building society current account holders from having voting rights and benefiting from future demutualisations. Treasury sources indicated they believed this was unlikely.

Another change is that of letting building societies include related accommodation for the first time in the 75 per cent of their loans that must be secured on property, permitting them to become large-scale landlords.

The draft Bill would also extend the role of the Building Societies Ombudsman to cover most or all financial services activities normally overseen by other watchdogs.

Members of building societies are entitled to a vote on this issue, but those with current accounts, such as the 1.2 million Maxima depositors at Halifax and more than one million Alliance & Leicester account holders, are not.

Despite the new proposals, building societies could still ex-

clusions of building society current account holders, who are presently barred from receiving free shares when their societies demutualise and convert to banks, may soon win the right to join in any future flotation bonanza under government proposals to be published next week.

Building societies would also have to inform depositors of serious proposals they receive, such as takeover bids, as part of a Treasury move to make them accountable to all members.

However, societies would also receive a broader range of

Big banks refuse to sink Eurotunnel

RUSSELL HOTTEN

The threat of Eurotunnel's smaller banks forcing the company into receivership this week appears to have been averted by the bigger creditors.

The 225 banks, owed £8bn by the Channel Tunnel operator, had a chance to vote on whether to reject the suspension of interest payments imposed by Eurotunnel six months ago.

Attempts by some smaller creditors to muster support against the standstill risked widening divisions among the banks, just as the two Eurotunnel mediators appointed last month began work.

Eurotunnel's unilateral suspension of junior debt for 18 months, costing the banks more than £1m a day in interest, outraged some smaller creditors.

The banks have until this Thursday to organise a vote

against the arrangement, otherwise the standstill will continue for another 12 months. Opponents must raise 65 per cent support, by value of the banks' exposure, if they are to vote down the standstill.

But one banking source said yesterday: "There now seems to be little mood among the majority of banks for any serious challenge. I do not think there will be a vote."

The 35 Japanese banks, thought to be owed up to 25 per cent of the debt, have been among the most strident opponents of the standstill. Yesterday, debt traders said Japanese creditors would continue to be heavy sellers of their debt as their reporting season gathers pace.

Gary Klesch, of Klesch & Co, said debt was trading at around 32p in the pound, though there was little evidence that the big Japanese banks were selling in large quantities.

£2.4m pay-off for Lord Young

JOHN EISENHAMMER
Financial Editor

Lord Young is to pocket £2.4m under the terms of a pay-off agreement announced yesterday with Cable & Wireless, where he was removed as chairman last November during a dramatic boardroom bust-up.

The bulk of the package comes from a profit on share options worth £2.2m. The balance will be made up of three months' salary, worth £11,000, a share of the directors' bonus scheme, and pension entitlements.

Lord Young of Grafton was dismissed, along with C&W's chief executive, James Ross, after an outbreak of hostilities that led the board to conclude that both top men had to go.

It was after this clear-out that BT made a second takeover approach to C&W, it was confirmed by both companies yesterday. But C&W said the exploratory talks broke

down, and there are no current share price during his time as chairman of the company."

Brian Smith, who took over C&W said it would not make as chairman of C&W, said of his payments to enhance Lord predecessor's pay-off: "The existing contractual settlement is fair to every pensioner rights. His salary in concerned the company, Lord95-96 was £475,000. The company, our employees and had previously agreed a shareholders. Lord Young will get a pay-off package with Mr gain from his share options, who had been on a line with the doubling of the £2,000 salary."



Lord Young: Dismissed after hostilities

Lord Young did not have an employment contract, at his own request, James Ross was on a one-year rolling contract.

Rod Olsen has taken over as acting chief executive, but the company is still looking for a permanent replacement. The boardroom bust-up reflected strong differences over the strategy of running C&W as a global federation of disparate companies, the biggest of which is the controlling stake in Hongkong Telecom.

Adding to the tension was the mixed performance of C&W's Mercury subsidiary, which was set up to compete with BT in the UK, but with disappointing results.

Lord Young, 64, served in several ministerial posts during Margaret Thatcher's years as Prime Minister. First as Secretary of State for Employment, and then at the Department of Trade and Industry until 1989. Lord Young joined C&W as chairman on 1 October 1990.

Market Report, page 20

The main... Thursday to organise a vote large...

STOCK MARKETS

FT-SE 100

Dow Jones*

Nikkei

*New Japan Index & group at 1990 base

Indices	Close	Day's change	Change(%)	1995/96 High	1995/96 Low	Vol (m)	YTD (%)
FTSE 100	3674.50	-35.80	-1.0	3781.30	2954.20	(u)	
FTSE 250	4212.00	-40.70	-1.0	4280.00	3300.90	(u)	
FTSE 350	1843.00	-17.90	-1.0	1889.00	1482.40	(u)	
FTSE 400				2076.11	1678.61	(u)	
FTSE 450				1864.59	1482.23	(u)	
FTSE 500				5842.42	3832.08	2.18	
FTSE 550				21118.30	14485.40	0.781	
FTSE 600				111194.48	6887.93	3.291	
FTSE 650				2501.22	1910.96	1.867	
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FTSE 10000							

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES

Short sterling*

UK medium gilt

US long bond

*Six Month Bankers' interest

*February 23, 1996

Money Market Rates

Bond Yields *

Index	1 Month	1 Year
UK	6.06	6.34
US	5.31	5.62
Japan	0.41	0.59
Switzerland	3.31	3.44

Medium Bond (%)	Year Ago	Long Bond	(%) Year Ago
6.12	8.67	8.24	8.65
6.39	7.34	6.70	7.49
3.20	4.68		
6.52	7.37	7.28	

*Weekend's interest

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Rises	Falls		
Price (¢) Change (p) Change (p)	Price (¢) Change (p) % Change		
Holmes & Morley	3.75	0.75	19.7
Creston Ltd/East	7	1.5	27.3
Headway	40	5.0	14.3
DGS	99	12	13.8

CURRENCIES

£/DM

£/¥

£/\$ (US Dollar April at 1990 base)

Pc

Dollar

Day's change	Year Ago
-0.20c	1.5914
1.40c	1.5205
-0.50c	2.2364
-90.943	143.584
1.01	85.2

Yesterday	Change	Year Ago	
£ (London)	0.6361	+0.08	0.628
£ (New York)	0.6562	unch	0.628
DM (London)	1.4522	-0.1391	1.4063
¥ (London)	106.245	-30.48	90.225
Base Rates	-6.00pc	6.75	

OTHER INDICATORS

Day's change	Index	Latest	Year Ago	Next Day		
+0.15	16.53	RPI	150.2+2.9pc	146.0	21 Mar	
+0.70	385.50	GDP	107.1	0.5pc	105.1	26 Mar
+0.61	242.94	Base Rates	-6.00pc	6.75		

business

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

Edited by TOM STEVENSON

Rugby held in its own territory

Rugby surprised no one with a 12 per cent underlying fall in profits from its cement and joinery businesses - the markets it operates in have been awful for more than a year now. But it did manage to raise some eyebrows with a total exceptional charge of £26.9m, which blew a hole in results for the 12 months to December.

After that write-off, the pre-tax number slipped 40 per cent to £45.8m (£76.1m) and earnings per share fell a similar amount to 4.5p (8.1p), just about covering the year's dividend of 3.6p.

Most of the damage was caused at the famously difficult US distribution subsidiary, acquired at the wrong stage of the cycle and the cause of anguish ever since. The latest restructuring appears to be a root-and-branch revamp and an admission at last that it was a bad deal.

Elsewhere there is evidence that last year's resignation for health reasons of Peter Carr, is having a tonic effect on the group's strategic direction. The planned sale of the metal building products arm, which makes steel structures and reinforcing wire, is a welcome concentration on the core businesses.

Some would say it is also about time too. Rugby has been well and truly overtaken by Blue Circle in the cement business and its margins are now half those of its bigger rival. Replacing half its capacity with new plant will help, but the effect won't be felt for two or three years. The cost of that, at about £100m, was outlined yesterday. It will necessitate another write-off of almost £10m.

In the doors and windows business, it is also hard to see where profits are going in a market still dogged by overcapacity.

The housing market is expected to pick up in the second half of this year but the sort of anaemic recovery currently being forecast will hardly be enough to make up for the complacency which has arguably seen the company sitting for too long on its leading position in the industry.

On the basis of forecast profits of £77.5m this year and £87m next time, the shares, down 2p to 113p, stand on a prospective price/earnings ratio of 1.23. That is ahead of the sector, which seems demanding given the limited prospects, putting too much faith in what is a fairly attractive sales-to-price ratio, a good return on capital and strong balance sheet.

Rugby is touted as a potential bid-target because it has much better

cash flow than its earnings figures would suggest. That provides a floor to the shares, but with a sub-market yield (a legacy of the parsimonious Mr Carr) and no clear strategic view, they are likely to remain flat.

Sports brands lead at Pentland

Pentland has built a portfolio of some of the best-known brands in sports, including Speedo swimwear, Berghaus outdoor clothing and Ellesse shoes. That is the glamorous side of the business and it has forged ahead; there is an ugly sister too, however, and it has been letting the side down.

Pentland's other division is consumer products which includes three businesses that make electrical appliances, greeting cards and wrapping paper. Last year all three had a torrid time.

In the full year to December, pre-tax profits were flat at £39m on sales 19 per cent higher at £755m. While profits at the footwear, clothing and sports division jumped from £14.5m to £18m in the year to December, profits

in consumer products slumped £9m to £7.6m. Interest receivable fell on lower cash balances of £40m and a further 2p to 103p yesterday.

The fan heater business was hit, soaring plastic prices and while sales were up by 50 per cent, margins were squeezed. Wood Industries, an American business which supplies electrical accessories to the DIY market, has been affected by retailers running down their stocks as well as higher material prices. Hanson White, the greeting card and gift wrap business was put under pressure by intense competition and higher paper prices.

Pentland is now conducting a strategic review which might see the disposal of these businesses. Some analysts expect a sale this year though as all three are profitable there is plainly no rush.

Of the sports brands, Pentland has high hopes of Speedo this year due to exposure at the Olympic games. Authentic Fitness Corporation, the Speedo licensee listed in New York, increased its contribution to Pentland's profits by 41 per cent last year to £6m.

Mike, the supplier of footballs which was acquired last year for £9.5m is not expected to make a profit until 1997 but Ellesse and Berghaus increased both sales and profits.

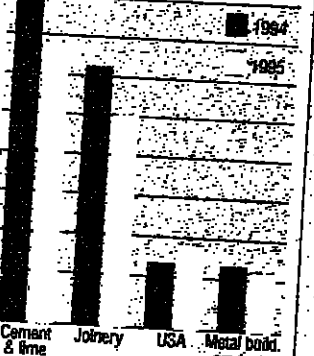
Rugby: at a glance

Market value: £729.8m, share price 114p

Five year record	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Turnover (£bn)	0.53	0.65	0.76	1.01	1.14
Pre-tax profits (£m)	57.4	57.6	63.8	76.1	45.8
Earnings per share (pence)	6.6	6.6	7.3	8.1	4.5
Dividends per share (pence)	3.23	3.23	3.39	3.60	3.6

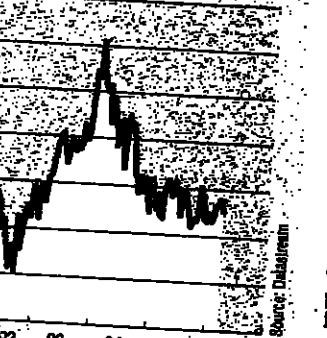
Operating profits

by activity, £m



Share price

pence



D&G requires a long view

being knocked back by the negativity surrounding extended warranties, revenues have started to grow again at Domestic & General specialised domestic products.

But the 6.8 per cent rise in pre-tax profits for the six months to 31 October 1995 to £5.39m confirms a steady expansion of the late and early 1990s has now steadied.

over, which had fallen by 1.5 per cent in the first six months of 1995, reacting to the extended warranties by the Office of Fair Trading, recovered to show 5 per cent growth in the latter half of last year.

Net retained income, which is a performance indicator, increased 9.5 per cent. The dividend per share was raised to 12.25p.

Results suggest that demand for extra warranty products is more robust, the OFT or the Consumers Association would have us believe. Despite scepticism as to the value of piling product insurance once the manufacturer's guarantee for a washing machine or video recorder has expired, D&G continues to have very high sales among its 2.7 million customers.

HSBC James Capel estimates year profits of £11.4m, with an EPS of 11p, putting the stock at just 15 times earnings, or a similar rate to the market as a whole.

But investors need to look well beyond current results to form a view on D&G. The company is currently spending heavily in an attempt to replicate the Continent, especially in Germany, its phenomenal pioneering success in the UK. Early results are moderately encouraging, but this is a green-field venture, and will take time. If five years from now the company can demonstrate significant progress in Germany then the current £16 share price looks cheap. But it is a big and financial service concepts are often poor at crossing national boundaries. High enough.

Management cleans up in Addis sweepstakes



Mop tops: Award-winners do it themselves

Addis, the leading maker of plastic household products such as mops and buckets, has been bought by its own management for £20m. The Swansea-based company has been built up by the Addis family over 40 years. It is probably best known for the TV ads of a few years back starring Mel Smith and Griff Rhys Jones, in which some humble Addis products were mistaken for an art exhibit until they were removed by the cleaning lady. Coincidentally, Addis sponsors the UK Independent Retailer of the Year Award, which has just been won by Griffiths DIY of Manchester. That's Richard Griffiths at the top of our picture, holding the prestigious Tiffany crystal trophy. In the middle row are two Addis sales people, Richard Schmidt on the left and Mike Badd on the right. Bottom left is Chris Drew of Maslens DIY of Bishop's Cleeve, one of the runners-up, and Mark Sharran, Addis marketing manager, and on the right Adrian Humphries, another runner-up from Humphries Homestyle, Bridport, Dorset. Nice mops.

"I saw your grandmother at the weekend. She sends her regards," Chancellor Ken Clarke told BBC reporter Jonathan Charles yesterday. Mr Clarke was in Brussels to discuss that evergreen subject, monetary union, with other EU finance ministers, but he had no intention of sharing his opinions with the surprised BBC man. It is not clear whether 83-year-old Nancy Lewis of Nottingham

is a Tory supporter, or a single currency supporter, or has any thoughts on a referendum. But Mr Clarke was determined not to let anything slip about EMU which might be seized on by Tory Eurosceptics, currently baying for blood, or which might indicate a difference of emphasis from John Major.

To the plash Marriott Hotel off London's glitzy Grosvenor Square on Sunday for an evening of unrestrained liveliness at the Lloyd's Private Banking Playwright of the Year Award. The Black Horse bank coughed up a cool £25,000 for the winner, playwright Sebastian Barry, after his play *The Steward of Christendom* got the thumbs up from the judges. Dame Diana Rigg presented the prize. Melvyn Bragg chaired the

panel of judges and Ned Sherrin provided a suitably witty record of the past year in theatre. There was a charming musical entertainment provided by Peter Greenwell and Patricia Hodge, with the master's own godson, Sheridan Morley, narrating.

Tales of the City. Last Friday afternoon, as Wall Street fell out of bed and dealing screens turned red etc, a large group of stockbrokers whose employer shall remain anonymous were ensconced in their favourite City hostelry enjoying a well-earned end of week beer-up. These occasions are usually perfectly safe from an employment point of view, since establishments like this routinely have a Cee-fax screen above the bar which would alert the drinkers to any serious business. Sadly the screen was switched off so when people came into the bar and said "Wall Street's off a hundred points" the brokers replied "Pull the other one." As a result yesterday morning the skivers were tied to their desks for the day. Journalists don't get up to that kind of thing, of course.

Fairrey remains bullish

RUSSELL HOTTEN

Fairrey Group, the specialist electronics and engineering company, remained bullish about its prospects in 1996 despite warning yesterday that the general economic environment was getting worse.

The company, which reported pre-tax profits up 35 per cent, said it would be protected against any economic slowdown by its expansion in Asian and American markets.

In January Fairrey, chaired by BICC's Sir Robin Biggam, paid

£50m for Particle Measuring Systems, a US high-tech company that makes instruments for the microchip industry to detect contamination.

Pre-tax profits in the year to 31 December rose from £25.8m to £34.2m, on sales up 35 per cent to £196.3m, bang in line with City expectations. Sir Robin said: "The combination of organic growth and development by acquisition has again enabled Fairrey to move forward in a very positive way. These figures reflect an improvement in all business sectors."

Earnings were up 20 per cent to 27.4p. More than 50 per cent of that growth came from the acquisition of Measuring Systems and of Loma, a private detection equipment company bought last year for £18.5m. Both Measuring Systems and Loma were performing in line with expectations, Sir Robin said. Adjusting for acquisitions, underlying cash generation was £8.4m. Fairrey is paying a final dividend of 5.45p (4.7p), making a total of 8p (7p) for the year, an increase of 14 per cent.

Memory shares dip further

Shares in Memory Corp, the AIM-listed microchip repaireur, continued their slide yesterday, on investor fears of a sharp decline in profits, writes Matthew Horsman.

From a high of 555p last September, the shares plunged to 135p at one point yesterday, recovering modestly to close at 142p, down 13p on the day. The drop follows a single-week rout of 215p last week, as the shares appeared to be in free-fall.

The drop has infuriated investors who subscribed to a placement of 1.2 million shares at 420p last autumn, just before a computer-chip price war was launched by US giant Intel. Prices for chips have dropped by 60 per cent since then.

Memory Corp was relentlessly promoted as one of AIM's clear success stories: a high-tech stock with a clear market niche. Floated in 1994 at 45p, it joined AIM in September last year.

The Scottish-based company buys defective chips, repairs them and creates refurbished boards for computer manufacturers. It had initially estimated the value of the market by 2000 to be £20bn, but that is sure to drop.

Memory also suffered production delays that affected results in 1995. That year, the company posted a loss of £1.95m.

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TOM STEVENSON

City Editor

Laporte, Britain's second-largest chemicals company, yesterday confirmed the City's worst expectations following last December's profits warning. After an £8.7m exceptional charge to cover the cost of a wide-ranging strategic review, earnings per share collapsed more than 90 per cent.

The new chief executive, Jim Leng, said: "It goes without saying that 1995 was a challenging year for Laporte and disappointing, particularly in the second half."

Mr Leng, whose arrival from the Dundee-based packaging group Low & Bonar last autumn was greeted with a fanfare, said: "A detailed strategic review has been concluded which confirms our confidence in the future. A vigorous action plan the Dundee-based packaging group Low & Bonar last autumn was greeted with a fanfare, said: "A detailed strategic review has been concluded which confirms our confidence in the future. A vigorous action plan

result. The market had expected an improved out-turn. As forecasted, pre-tax profits emerged at £113.2m before the exceptional charge, down 8 per cent from 1994's 23.5m. The fall occurred despite an 11 per cent jump in sales to £1,080m, underlying a squeeze in margins afflicted in the second half of the year.

Mr Leng confirmed the company's restructuring, which thin weeks of his arrival had seen the departure of its former chief executive and finance director. "A detailed strategic review has been concluded which confirms our confidence in the future. A vigorous action plan

the Dundee-based packaging group Low & Bonar last autumn was greeted with a fanfare, said: "A detailed strategic review has been concluded which confirms our confidence in the future. A vigorous action plan the Dundee-based packaging group Low & Bonar last autumn was greeted with a fanfare, said: "A detailed strategic review has been concluded which confirms our confidence in the future. A vigorous action plan

ing their jobs. Full benefits of the restructuring are not expected before next year.

Like many of its peers, Laporte was hit in 1995 by violent swings in the price of its raw materials.

The confirmation of last year's warning closes a difficult period for Laporte, which saw its reputation dented by the unexpected trading statement. Its shares fell 189p on the day of the announcement to a low for 1995 of 613p, although they have since recovered to 683p, down 7p yesterday.

Before the exceptional charge, earnings per share fell 10 per cent to 41.5p from 46.1p, while including it the decline was more dramatic: 91 per cent to 4.3p. Despite the fall, Laporte is recommending an unchanged final dividend of 14.5p, to make a total for the year of 23p, up 2.7 per cent.

Redrow sees the light

Redrow's chairman, Steven

sounded an optimistic note yesterday despite announcing interim pre-tax profits from £16.3m to £12.1m for the six months to December. He said: "I believe the period saw the best performance in the housing market cycle and these results represent strong performance in a difficult market. During the last 12 months house prices have stabilised and there has been a return of customer confidence." Turnover slipped a half from £108.7m to £94.8m, earnings per share were 3.3p and the interim dividend increased to 1.1p (1.05p).

Warning from Co

Costain, the building and

ion group, saw its shares fall 11.5p to 79.5p yesterday as it saw no reason for the sudden share price rise last week. It also warned that its full-year results would be some way below current expectations. Analysts expect a loss for 1995, which compares with last year's loss of £180.4m.

Persimmon finds synergies

Persimmon said yesterday

ed to make "substantial" cost savings from its £177m takeover of Ideal Homes. Duncan Davidson said he saw good "synergies" from consolidating Persimmon's 13 operating subsidiaries. Its head office will be merged with Persimmon's. The takeover yesterday announced pre-tax profits of £22.8m, £24.3m last time, and a maintained dividend of 9.5p.

Gloomy noises

British Vita's chairman

described 1995 as an "extremely difficult year" for the chemicals company operating against a backdrop of weak demand. He was speaking as the chemicals company announced pre-tax profits for the year to December of £7m. The company's earnings per share fell from 7.7p to 7.95p.

BANK OF SCOTLAND

INTEREST RATE CHANGE

With effect from 11th March 1996, interest rates payable on the undernoted accounts have changed.

MONEY MARKET CHEQUE ACCOUNT	Gross %
£250,000 and above	5.50
£100,000 to £249,999	4.50
£25,000 to £99,999	4.25
£2,500 to £24,999	3.50

BANKING DIRECT CHEQUE ACCOUNT	Gross %
£100,000 and above	4.50
£25,000 to £99,999	1.75
£10,000 to £24,999	1.25
£5,000 to £9,999	0.75
Less than £5,000	0.25

MONEY MARKET BUSINESS CHEQUE ACCOUNT	Gross %
£250,000 and above	5.50
£100,000 to £249,999	4.50
£25,000 to £99,999	3.50
£2,500 to £24,999	3.00

BANKING DIRECT INVESTMENT ACCOUNT	Gross %
£250,000 and above	5.75
£100,000 to £249,999	5.25
£10,000 to £24,999	4.50
£5,000 to £9,999	3.75
Less than £5,000	3.00

BANK OF SCOTLAND CENTREBANK DIVISION

*Gross - The annual rate of interest payable without the deduction of basic rate income tax to eligible non tax-payers. Interest payable monthly. Interest rates subject to variation.

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